

BYZANTIUM, KIEV AND MOSCOW:  
A STUDY IN ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONS

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AMONG the many still unresolved problems that confront the historian of medieval Eastern Europe is that of the precise nature of the relationship between the Church of Russia and the Patriarchate of Constantinople. This gap in our knowledge is due to the scantiness and vagueness of the relevant sources: Byzantine writers, at least before the fourteenth century, show themselves singularly uncommunicative about the Russian Church; while the early Russian chroniclers are almost equally reticent on the ecclesiastical affairs of their country, and especially on the relations of their Church with the Byzantine Patriarchate.

One fact stands out, uncontroverted and well-known: from 1039, when a Byzantine prelate is mentioned in Kiev,<sup>1</sup> to 1448, when the Russian bishops, severing their dependence on the Unionist Patriarch of Constantinople, elected their own primate, the Russian Church was a metropolitan diocese of the Byzantine Patriarchate. Was this so from the beginning, and can this direct subordination of the Russian Church to Byzantium be traced during the half-century that followed the official acceptance of Christianity by Prince Vladimir of Kiev in 988 or 989?<sup>2</sup> In the absence of explicit and contemporary evidence on this point, controversy has raged, and some of the advocates in this *cause célèbre* are still in the field. It is not the purpose of this article to discuss the conflicting theories of those scholars who have sought to prove — unsuccessfully in my opinion — that Vladimir's church was dependent on the Bulgarian Patriarchate of Ohrid; subject to Rome; or autocephalous.<sup>3</sup> The ingenuity and learning with which these hypotheses have sometimes been argued cannot gainsay the circumstantial evidence which strongly suggests that the Russian Church was from the

<sup>1</sup> *The Russian Primary Chronicle (Povest' vremennykh let)*, ed. V. P. Adrianova — Peretts (Moscow, 1950), I, p. 103, — English translation by S. H. Cross and O. P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), p. 138. In subsequent references to this document the original will be cited as "Povest'," and the translation as "Cross."

<sup>2</sup> The acceptance of one or the other of these two dates depends on the relative value attached to the different sources relating to Vladimir's baptism. See G. Laehr, *Die Anfänge des russischen Reiches* (Berlin, 1930), pp. 110–15.

<sup>3</sup> For the "Bulgarian" theory, see M. D. Priselskov, *Ocherki po iserkovno-politicheskoy istorii Kievskoy Rusi X–XII vekov* (St. Petersburg, 1913), pp. 35–76; H. Koch, "Byzanz, Ochrid und Kiev 987–1037," *Kyrios*, III (1938), pp. 272–84. For the "Roman" theory, see N. de Baumgarten, "Saint Vladimir et la conversion de la Russie," *Orientalia Christiana*, 27, pt. 1 (1932); M. Jugie, "Les origines romaines de l'Eglise russe," *Echos d'Orient*, 36 (1937), pp. 257–70. For the view that Vladimir's church was autocephalous, see E. Golubinsky, *Istoriya russkoy iserkvi*, I, part 1 (2nd ed., Moscow, 1901), pp. 264–9; G. Vernadsky, "The status of the Russian Church during the first half-century following Vladimir's conversion," *Slavonic Review*, 20 (1941), pp. 298–314.

beginning directly subordinated to the Patriarchate of Byzantium: the statement of the eleventh-century Arab historian Yahya of Antioch that the Emperor Basil II sent to Vladimir of Russia "metropolitans and bishops" who baptised him and his people;<sup>4</sup> the role played by the Greek clergy of the Crimea in the christianization of Russia, the building of Vladimir's first stone church in Kiev by Byzantine architects, his marriage with Anna, the Emperor's sister,<sup>5</sup> his assumption at baptism of the name Basil, doubtless a symbol of his spiritual adoption by the Emperor: <sup>6</sup> surely these facts create a strong presumption in favor of the view that Vladimir's church was placed under East Roman authority.<sup>7</sup>

This contemporary, if indirect, evidence is confirmed by the explicit testimony of a fourteenth-century Byzantine historian whose relevance to the problem under discussion does not seem to have been justly appreciated. Nicephorus Gregoras, in the thirty-sixth book of his *Ἱστορία Ῥωμαϊκή*, in which he deals at length with the past and contemporary history of the Russian Church, writes: "from the time when this nation [i.e. the Russians] embraced holy religion and received the divine baptism of the Christians, it was laid down once for all that it would be under the jurisdiction of one bishop . . . ; and that this primate would be subject to the See of Constantinople, and would receive from it the laws of the spiritual authority."<sup>8</sup>

This text is so clear and explicit that its neglect by historians seems at first surprising. Yet the evidence of so late a writer must clearly be treated with considerable caution; it is possible, moreover, that, by appealing to a tradition of so venerable an antiquity, Gregoras was concerned in this passage to support the claims over the Russian Church which were being pressed with renewed vigor by the Byzantine Patriarchate toward the middle of the fourteenth century; and at least one expression in this passage

<sup>4</sup> *Histoire de Yahya-Ibn-Sa'id d'Antioche*, ed. and transl. by I. Kratchkovsky and A. Vasiliev, *Patrologia Orientalis*, XXIII, fasc. 3 (1932), p. 423.

<sup>5</sup> *Povest'*, s.a. 988, 989, pp. 76-7, 80-3; Cross, pp. 112-3, 116-9.

<sup>6</sup> Iakov, Monk, *Pamyat' i pokhvala knyazyu ruskomu Volodimeru*: Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, I, 1, p. 239.

<sup>7</sup> The view that the Russian Church was from the time of its foundation placed under Byzantine authority is strongly and convincingly argued by V. Laurent, "Aux origines de l'Eglise russe," *Echos d'Orient*, 38 (1939), pp. 279-95; E. Honigmann, "Studies in Slavic Church History," *Byzantion*, 17 (1944-5), pp. 128-62; F. Dvornik, *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe* (London, 1949), pp. 169-79; and M. V. Levchenko, "Vzaimootnosheniya Vizantii i Rusi pri Vladimire," *Vizantiiskiy Vremennik*, 7 (1953), pp. 194-223.

<sup>8</sup> Τοῦτο τοίνυν τὸ ἔθνος, ἀφ' οὗ τῇ εὐσεβείᾳ προσερρύνῃ θρησκείᾳ καὶ τὸ τῶν χριστιανῶν θεῖον ἐδέξατο βάπτισμα, ὑφ' ἐνὶ τυποῦσθαι τέτακται καθάπαξ ἀρχιερεὶ . . . καὶ εἶναι τὸν πρῶτον τοῦτον ἀρχιερεὰ τῷ τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ὑπέκοντα θρόνῳ, καὶ ὑπὸ τούτου τὰ νόμιμα δέχεσθαι τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς πνευματικῆς. Nicephorus Gregoras, *Historiae Byzantinae*, xxxvi, cap. 22-3, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1855) III, pp. 512-13.

seems inspired by the ecclesiastical polemics of the time.<sup>9</sup> Yet there do not appear to be adequate grounds for refusing all credence to this statement of Gregoras. Biased as he sometimes is, his knowledge of Russian affairs is, as will be shown below, extensive and on the whole accurate; and, in this case at least, his testimony on the earliest organization of the Russian Church is supported by the evidence already cited.

In a passage of the thirty-sixth book of the *Ἱστορία Ῥωμαϊκή* which immediately follows the one quoted above, Nicephorus Gregoras makes an even more remarkable statement. Referring to the primate (*ἀρχιερέα*) of the Russian Church and to the time when the Russians were converted to Christianity, he writes: "it was laid down that he would be taken alternately now from that nation [i.e. from the Russians], now from those who were both born and brought up here [i.e. in Byzantium], each primate always being raised to the throne there, after the death of the previous incumbent, by alternate succession, in order that the link between the two nations, thus secured and ratified, might forever preserve the unity of faith pure and undefiled, and find an increased stability for its existence and its strength."<sup>10</sup>

The language of this passage may be rather involved and pleonastic, but its meaning is clear beyond doubt: Gregoras is asserting that when the

<sup>9</sup> The words *ὅφ' ἐνὶ τυποῦσθαι τέτακται καθάπαξ ἀρχιερεῖ*, in their emphasis on the ecclesiastical unity of all the Russian lands under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Kiev, are doubtless intended to justify the abolition by the Emperor John VI Cantacuzenus in August, 1347 of the separate Russian metropolitan diocese of Galicia, established in 1303 by Andronicus II. At that time Gregoras was still on good terms with John Cantacuzenus, and thus probably approved of the ecclesiastical re-unification of Russia. In several public documents issued in 1347 in Constantinople the abolition of the metropolitan diocese of Galicia is held to be justified by the creation, at the time of Russia's conversion to Christianity, of a single ecclesiastical organization for the whole of the country, under the metropolitan of Kiev. See the chrysobullon of John VI reuniting the metropolitanate of Galicia with that of Kiev: K. E. Zachariae von Lingenthal, *Jus Graeco-Romanum*, III (Leipzig), pp. 700-3, and the edict of the Patriarch Isidore, confirming this decision: *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani*, ed. F. Miklosich and I. Müller, I (Vienna, 1860), p. 267. In a letter written in the same year to Prince Lyubart of Volynia, the Emperor states that the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Kiev over the whole of Russia was established at the time of the country's conversion, "by custom and law" (*αὐτόθι ἔθιμον ἦν καὶ νενομισμένον*): *Ibid.*, p. 265. Finally, an edict of the Patriarch Anthony, issued in 1389, reiterates this statement, in terms reminiscent of Gregoras' words: *ἡ τῆς Ῥωσίας ἐπαρχία πᾶσα ὅφ' ἕνα μητροπολίτην ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἐτάχθη ποιμαίνεσθαι τε καὶ διευθύνεσθαι*: *Ibid.*, II, p. 116.

<sup>10</sup> *Εἶναι δ' αὐτὸν καὶ νῦν μὲν ἐκ τοῦ γένους ἐκείνου, νῦν δ' ἐκ τῶν τῆδε φύντων ὁμοῦ καὶ τραφέντων, ἀμοιβαδὸν, τὴν ἐκεῖ προεδρίαν αἰὲν διαδεχομένων μετὰ τὸν προτέρου θάνατον παραλλάξ, ὥς ἂν τὸ τοῖν δυοῖν γενοῖν συναφὲς οὕτως βεβαιούμενον καὶ κυρούμενον βεβαιότεραν ἐς τὸ ἀκρήατόν τε καὶ ἀκραιφνὲς καὶ τὴν τῆς πίστεως σύμπνοιαν ἔχῃ φυλάττειν αἰὲν καὶ μονιμωτέραν τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ δύναμιν.* Val. Parisot, *Livre XXXVII de l'Histoire Romaine de Nicéphore Gregoras. Texte grec complet donné pour la première fois, traduction française, notes philologiques et historiques* (Paris, 1851), p. 68.



Russians were officially converted to Christianity — that is in 988 or 989 — an agreement was concluded between the authorities of Constantinople and Kiev — in other words between the Emperor Basil II and Prince Vladimir I — by the terms of which the primates of the Russian Church — i.e. the metropolitans of Kiev — were for all times to be appointed according to the principle of alternate nationality, a native Russian succeeding a Byzantine, and vice-versa. This alternation is explicitly referred to three times in this short passage and is emphasized by the terms ἀμειβαδόν and παραλλάξ.”<sup>11</sup>

The importance of this passage was perceived as early as 1851 by V. Parisot, the first editor of the thirty-sixth book of Gregoras' *History*.<sup>12</sup> He accepted Gregoras' statement as true, but his insufficiently critical approach to this passage, and his somewhat sketchy knowledge of Russian history did not lead him to any very clear or positive conclusions.<sup>13</sup> In 1889 the Russian historian M. D'yakonov quoted this passage as something of a curiosity and, in the absence of corroborative evidence to support Gregoras' statement, was cautious in assessing its historical value.<sup>14</sup> Finally in 1913 another Russian scholar, P. Sokolov, ridiculed the attempt to read into this passage any reference to an alternation in the nationality of the metropolitans of Kiev.<sup>15</sup> As far as I am aware, in no subsequent work of scholarship was this passage discussed.

The negative attitude of Sokolov, and the silence of recent historians, are understandable, for Parisot's edition of the thirty-sixth book of Gregoras' *History*, from which this passage has been quoted, was superseded in 1855 (four years later) by the Bonn edition of the third volume of the complete *History*, which contains this passage in a mutilated form; six words are missing, and they are precisely the crucial words which refer to the alternation in the nationality of the primates of the Russian Church; Parisot's edition reads: εἶναι δ' αὐτὸν καὶ νῦν μὲν ἐκ τοῦ γένους ἐκείνου, νῦν δ' ἐκ τῶν

<sup>11</sup> “Passer d'un prélat russe à un prélat grec, c'est nommer παραλλάξ, peu importe qu'après le Grec on prenne d'autres Grecs ou que l'on revienne à un Russe: si l'on y revient, les choix se feront ἀμειβαδόν; mais, tant qu'on ne dit pas ἀμειβαδόν, on ne sait pas si les choix mettent alternativement un Russe et un Grec sur le siège primatial. Qu'on ne croie donc pas παραλλάξ synonyme d' ἀμειβαδόν; il y a entre eux la même différence qu'entre *varier* et *alterner* . . . Nous disons parfaitement en français *l'alternative dans la variation*.” *Ibid.*, pp. 281–2.

<sup>12</sup> See note 10. Parisot called this book the thirty-seventh, but his numeration has been superseded by that adopted by the Bonn editors.

<sup>13</sup> Parisot asserts, in particular, that in the course of the eleventh century this alternation in the nationality of the metropolitans of Kiev “fut consacrée et devint comme officielle” (*ibid.*, p. 281), but adduces no conclusive evidence for this statement.

<sup>14</sup> *Vlast' moskovskikh gosudareï* (St. Petersburg, 1889), pp. 6–7.

<sup>15</sup> *Russky arkhierey iz Vizantii* (Kiev, 1913), pp. 39–40.

τῇδε φύντων ὁμοῦ καὶ τραφέντων. The Bonn edition reads: εἶναι δ' αὐτὸν καὶ νῦν μὲν ἐκ τῶν τῇδε φύντων ὁμοῦ καὶ τραφέντων.<sup>16</sup>

It is not surprising that historians, who since 1855 have tended to read the thirty-sixth book of the *History* in the Bonn edition rather than in Parisot's earlier version, have, with the exception of D'yakonov, failed to realize the true meaning of Gregoras' words; indeed, the defective text of the Bonn edition, in spite of such patent clues alluding to alternation as the correlative clause νῦν μὲν and the words ἀμοιβαδόν and παραλλάξ, could at first glance be read to mean that the Russian primates were to be chosen solely from among those who had been born and brought up in Byzantium.<sup>17</sup> In Migne's edition of the *History*, published in 1865, the passage in question is printed in the same, defective form.<sup>18</sup>

The omission of the crucial words which refer to the alternation in the nationality of the primates of Russia from all editions of the thirty-sixth book subsequent to Parisot's is undoubtedly due to an error of I. Bekker, the editor of the third volume of the Bonn text of Gregoras' *History*: for the printed text of this passage in Bonn (as indeed of the entire thirty-sixth book) is derived from a single manuscript, the Par. Gr. 3075 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, which is a copy made in the year 1699 of the fourteenth-century Vat. Gr. 1095 in the Vatican Library;<sup>19</sup> and both manuscripts contain the crucial words in full.<sup>20</sup> I know of no other manuscript containing the thirty-sixth book of Gregoras' *History*. Omont is wrong in stating that it is also to be found in the Par. Gr. 1276 in the Bibliothèque Nationale,<sup>21</sup> an error repeated by R. Guiland in his book on Nicephorus Gregoras.<sup>22</sup> So we are left ultimately with a single manuscript, the Vat. Gr. 1095, on the basis of which this passage, defectively printed in the Bonn edition, should be corrected.<sup>23</sup>

What are we to think of this statement of Gregoras? In no other source

<sup>16</sup> *Historiae Byzantinae* lib. xxxvi, cap. 23, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1855), III, p. 513, lines 2-4.

<sup>17</sup> This conclusion is, in fact, drawn by Sokolov (*Russky arkhierey iz Vizantii*, pp. 39-40, 265).

<sup>18</sup> *P. G.*, CXLIX, col. 453.

<sup>19</sup> Parisot, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3; R. Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras* (Paris, 1926), p. xviii.

<sup>20</sup> Par. Gr. 3075, fol. 75 r; Vat. Gr. 1095 fols. 255 v-256 r.

<sup>21</sup> H. A. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, I (Paris, 1898), no. 1276.

<sup>22</sup> Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*, p. 242.

<sup>23</sup> The omission of the crucial words from the Bonn edition was no doubt accidental: this is shown by the fact that in the Latin translation underneath the Greek text they are given in full: *qui modo ex gente illa, modo ex nostra terra natis educatisque post antecedentis mortem mutuo sedem occupat*. *Hist. Byz.*, Bonn, III, p. 513.

is such an agreement between Byzantium and Russia, regulating the nationality of the metropolitans of Kiev, so much as mentioned; the view currently held by scholars of the methods by which the Russian primates were appointed is far removed from the notion of any such working compromise between Russia and the Empire; and these facts, when added to the lateness of Gregoras' evidence, might well suggest that his statement was a product of fantasy or misinformation. Yet, so long as Gregoras' statement is not directly contradicted by other, more reliable, sources, it is surely worth inquiring whether any evidence, however indirect, can be found to support it, and whether, generally speaking, his testimony might provide adequate grounds for reconsidering the problem of the ecclesiastical relations between Byzantium and medieval Russia. The first step in such an inquiry must be an attempt to ascertain the general reliability of Gregoras' statements about the Russian people and their Church.

In his *History* Gregoras discusses the affairs of Russia at considerable length, in a passage of book twenty-eight which relates how the Grand Duke of Moscow sent, *ca.* 1350, a large sum of money to the Emperor John Cantacuzenus for the repair of the church of St. Sophia,<sup>24</sup> and especially in book thirty-six, in which he describes the struggle carried on before the authorities in Constantinople between 1353 and 1356, by the rival candidates of the Grand Dukes of Moscow and Lithuania, for the jurisdiction over the whole Russian Church.<sup>25</sup> The latter account contains several statements that are tendentious and inaccurate. Gregoras' bias is revealed whenever he touches, however lightly, on the subject of Hesychasm: since 1347, when the accession of John Cantacuzenus secured the triumph of the hesychast doctrines of Gregory Palamas, Gregoras had been in opposition, and in the course of the next few years emerged as the leader of the anti-Palamite party in Byzantium. As such, and as one who had suffered for his convictions, he entertained a particularly violent dislike for the Palamite Patriarch Philotheus,<sup>26</sup> who in June 1354 appointed the Muscovite candidate, Alexius, bishop of Vladimir, to the post of "metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia." Gregoras' dislike of Philotheus undoubtedly colored his judgment of the Patriarch's nominee; and the portrait he draws of Alexius, behaving like some villain of melodrama and securing the metropolitan see by distributing enormous bribes in Constantinople<sup>27</sup> — a picture which flatly contradicts the evidence, not only of Russian sources, but of By-

<sup>24</sup> *Hist. Byz.* lib. xxviii, cap. 34-6, Bonn, III, pp. 198-200.

<sup>25</sup> *Op. cit.*, lib. xxxvi, cap. 20-51, *ibid.*, pp. 511-26.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Guiland, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 40, 51, 97, 226, 289-91.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 36-7, p. 519.

zantine documents as well<sup>28</sup> — shows that his judgment of Russian affairs was apt at times to be clouded by partisan bias. The same desire to blacken the Patriarch Philotheus appears in Gregoras' account of Alexius' unsuccessful rival Roman, a candidate of Olgerd, Grand Duke of Lithuania, who later in the same year 1354 was appointed by the Patriarch "metropolitan of the Lithuanians." Gregoras extolls the virtues of Roman as vigorously as he castigates the vices of Alexius,<sup>29</sup> and, contrary to the evidence of all the other sources, he makes Roman come to Constantinople and receive the Patriarch's consecration before Alexius' arrival.<sup>30</sup> His aim is clearly to suggest — though, doubtless to salve his historian's conscience, he does so with disingenuous ambiguity — that the Patriarch Philotheus, out of deference for the Muscovite gold, unlawfully appointed Alexius to the same post — the metropolitan see of Kiev and All Russia — to which he had just nominated Roman.<sup>31</sup>

There can thus be no doubt that, in discussing the contemporary affairs of the Russian Church, Gregoras, carried away by his hatred of Hesychasm and of the Patriarch Philotheus, was apt at times to select and twist the facts to conform with his polemical aims. Even here, however, he seems reluctant to indulge in downright invention or falsification.<sup>32</sup> But whenever

<sup>28</sup> The Russian sources referring to Alexius, who was canonized by the Russian Church, are cited and analyzed in Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 171, ff. High praise is meted out to Alexius in the synodal decree of the Patriarch Philotheus, of June 30, 1354 (*Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani*, I, pp. 336–40) and in the synodal decree of the Patriarch Callistus, of July 1361 (*ibid.*, pp. 425–30). Gregoras' picture of Alexius is all the less convincing, since Alexius had been appointed Vicar-General to the metropolitan of Russia and warmly recommended for the post of future metropolitan by his predecessor Theognostus, a prelate for whom Gregoras professes the highest regard (*Hist. Byz.* lib. xxxvi, cap. 24, 27–30, Bonn, III, pp. 513–516).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 34–5, p. 518.

<sup>30</sup> The sequence of events, and the exact chronology of Alexius' and Roman's two journeys to Constantinople remain, admittedly, rather uncertain, as the different sources do not always agree. Cf. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 177–87, 190–3; A. M. Ammann, *Abriss der ostslawischen Kirchengeschichte* (Vienna, 1950), pp. 94–5. It is clear, however, that Alexius was already in Constantinople in 1353, and that Roman could not have arrived before the following year.

<sup>31</sup> The true facts are stated in the synodal decree of the Patriarch Callistus, of July, 1361. (*Acta Patr. Const.*, I, pp. 425–30). Alexius was appointed *μητροπολίτης Κνέβου και πάσης Ῥωσίας* (on June 30, 1354; *ibid.*, p. 340) and Roman "a little later" (*μετὰ μικρόν*) *μητροπολίτης Λιτβῶν*. Gregoras, while inverting the chronological order of these appointments, refers to the titles granted to the two prelates in the vaguest possible terms: *Εὐθὺς γὰρ χειροτονηθέντος ἐνταῦθα τοῦ Ῥωμανοῦ, ἀθρόον ἐπεφύη τις ἐκείθεν ἕτερος, τοῦνομ' Ἀλέξιος, . . . καὶ αὐτὸς αὐθήμερον . . . ὤφθη μητροπολίτης* (*loc. cit.*, cap. 36, p. 519). Previously he had stated that Roman aspired to the metropolitan see of All Russia (*τὴν τῆς ὅλης Ῥωσίας ἐπισκοπὴν καὶ μητρόπολιν*; *ibid.*, cap. 34, p. 518), and we are doubtless meant to believe that Roman and Alexius were in turn appointed to the same post.

<sup>32</sup> P. Sokolov (*Russky arkhierей iz Vizantii*, pp. 376–8) plausibly suggests that Gregoras intermingled the facts of Roman's first and second visits to Constantinople (in 1354 and

Gregoras' partisan passions were not involved, his treatment of Russia was full, careful and well-informed. His remarks on the geography, climate, and economy of the country,<sup>33</sup> on the transfer of the metropolitan's residence from Kiev to Vladimir because of the devastation of South Russia by the Mongols,<sup>34</sup> on the division of the realm into three or four states or principalities,<sup>35</sup> are clearly the work of a conscientious and accurate recorder. His remarks on the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, whose rulers had, by the middle of the fourteenth century, conquered the greater part of western and south-western Russia, are equally valuable and precise. He mentions the paganism of their rulers and their successful resistance to the Tatars;<sup>36</sup> makes some penetrating observations on the ecclesiastical policy of the Grand Duke Olgerd<sup>37</sup> (1345–77), who, though a pagan himself, sought to extract from the Byzantine authorities the appointment of his candidate Roman as metropolitan of Kiev, as a means of furthering his political designs on the Muscovite lands; and supplies us with information, clearly obtained at first hand, on the age and physical appearance of Roman, and on his kinship with Olgerd's wife.<sup>38</sup>

If Gregoras' information on the history and politics of Lithuania was obviously obtained from Roman, whom he must have met in Constanti-

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1355), in order to bolster up his thesis that the Byzantine authorities, in withholding their support from Roman, missed the opportunity of converting the latter's sovereign, Olgerd, to Christianity. In another context, Gregoras has been harshly criticized for stating that a Russian ruler (ἡγεμὼν) had been granted the Byzantine court title of ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπεζίης by the Emperor Constantine the Great (*Hist. Byz.*, lib. vii, cap. 5, ed. L. Schopenus [Bonn, 1829], I, p. 239). The disregard for chronology is, of course, blatant, but this passage occurs in a much earlier section of the *History*, and may well have been written before Gregoras had begun systematically to collect information about Russia. Moreover, we know from Maximus Planudes that in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century a Russian ruler did bear the title of ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπεζίης. See H. Haupt, "Neue Beiträge zu den Fragmenten des Dio Cassius," *Hermes*, 14 (1879), p. 445. Cf. A. A. Vasiliev, "Was Old Russia a Vassal State of Byzantium?," *Speculum*, 7 (1932), pp. 353–4. Cf. *infra*, note 41.

<sup>33</sup> *Hist. Byz.* lib. xxxvi, cap. 21–22, Bonn, III, p. 512.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 24–30, pp. 513–6. It may seem surprising that Gregoras does not mention Moscow which, by the time he was writing, was already in fact the political and ecclesiastical capital of Eastern Russia. Yet the Byzantine authorities were slow to recognize this fact, and in the middle of the fourteenth century the primate of the Russian Church still held the title of "metropolitan of Kiev and of All Russia," though his predecessors ceased to reside in Kiev in 1300.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 25–6, pp. 513–4. Though it is possible that this is a reference to the political fragmentation of Russia which began in the twelfth century, it seems more likely that Gregoras is alluding to the "three or four" rival and independent principalities into which Eastern Russia was divided in the middle of the fourteenth century, i.e. Moscow, Tver', Suzdal' and Ryazan'. Cf. G. Vernadsky, *The Mongols and Russia* (New Haven, 1953), p. 206.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 26, 33–4, pp. 514, 517.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 34–5, pp. 517–18.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 34–5, p. 518.

nople, it seems likely that much of his knowledge about Russia was derived from Theognostus, metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia from 1328 to 1353. Theognostus was a native of Constantinople, and Gregoras writes of him with affectionate admiration, partly because of the prestige and influence he is said to have wielded in Russia,<sup>39</sup> and especially because of the vigorous opposition he displayed, on Gregoras' showing, to the doctrines of Gregory Palamas.<sup>40</sup> There is no proof that Gregoras and Theognostus actually met, but it is hard to believe that the leader of the anti-Palamite party did not make the acquaintance of so distinguished an ally during one of the latter's visits to Constantinople, or that he failed to obtain from him first-hand information on the current conditions and past history of the land over which he exercised the supreme spiritual authority.<sup>41</sup>

Gregoras' testimony on the Russo-Byzantine agreement regulating the nationality of the metropolitans of Kiev should not be regarded as suspect *a priori*: it occurs not in the later chapters of the thirty-sixth book, where the author, yielding to his anti-Palamite bias, seeks to discredit the Patriarch Philotheus and the Emperor John Cantacuzenus, but in the first part of the same book, near the beginning of the section dealing with Russia, where Gregoras' information is at its most accurate and reliable. At the time he was writing the thirty-sixth book — shortly after his release in 1355

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 24, 27–31, pp. 513–16.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, lib., xxvi, cap. 47, p. 114. Cf. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 168–9; Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*, pp. 41–2.

<sup>41</sup> One of Nicephorus Gregoras' letters bears the superscription τῷ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπεζῆς. The editor of this letter, I. C. von Aretin, took this anonymous addressee to be a prince of Russia, on the grounds that the title of ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπεζῆς was, on Gregoras' own showing, born by Russian rulers. (*Beyträge zur Geschichte und Literatur*, 4 [Munich, 1805], pp. 609–19.) Cf. *supra*, note 32. This view is accepted by R. Guiland, the recent editor of Gregoras' correspondence, who dates the letter between 1325 and 1330 and suggests that it was probably written to the Grand Duke of Moscow, Ivan I Kalita (1325–41) (*Correspondance de Nicéphore Grégoras* [Paris, 1927], pp. 16, 378–9). The contents of the letter are vague and platitudinous, but show that Gregoras entertained a lively correspondence with the addressee, for whom he professed a high regard. It is quite possible that the Byzantine court title of ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπεζῆς was, at least in the fourteenth century, traditionally in the hands of the Russian princes, as that of κουροπαλάτης was in those of the Georgian princes in the tenth century (see Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, cap. 45–6, ed. Gy. Moravcsik and R. J. H. Jenkins [Budapest, 1949], pp. 204–22). Cf. G. Ostrogorsky, "Die byzantinische Staatenhierarchie," *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, 8 (1936), p. 59; A. A. Vasiliev, "Was Old Russia a Vassal State of Byzantium?," *Speculum*, 7 (1932), pp. 353–4. If Gregoras' correspondent was really the Grand Duke of Moscow, another probable source of our author's knowledge of Russian affairs would be discovered. But was ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπεζῆς the Muscovite sovereign? The identification, however tempting, seems to me still unproved. On the title of ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπεζῆς see J. B. Bury, *The Imperial Administrative System in the ninth century* (London, 1911), pp. 125–6; Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Cerimoniis*, ed. Bonn, I, p. 725 (in the tenth century); and Ps.-Codinus, *De Officiis*, ed. Bonn, p. 35 (in the fourteenth century).

from imprisonment in the Monastery of the Chora <sup>42</sup> — he was in Constantinople, and, through the high connections that he had previously enjoyed, and doubtless to some extent still maintained, at Court, in the Church, and in the office of the Logothete of the Dromos, must have been able to acquire first-hand information on the problem of the appointment of the metropolitans of Kiev, particularly since this problem had been recently reviewed, and no doubt widely debated, in Constantinople in connection with the appointment, in June 1354, of Alexius to the primatial see of Russia.<sup>43</sup> Gregoras is known to have had access to documents which are no longer extant.<sup>44</sup> His leading modern biographer, R. Guiland, has observed that the most reliable parts of his *History* are the later books, including the thirty-sixth.<sup>45</sup> And there is no reason to tax Gregoras with too much exaggeration when, in another part of his work, he asserts that of the events he describes he has personally seen or heard the greater part, relying for the remainder on the exact account of eye-witnesses.<sup>46</sup>

We may thus conclude that Gregoras' statements relating to Russia deserve to be taken seriously, since our author, generally speaking, treats the subject in an accurate and well-informed manner. At the same time, his remoteness, in time and distance, from the events he recounts, and his occasional lapses into partiality, make it impossible to accept unquestioningly his evidence on the Russian Church, unless it is supported by the testimony of other sources. This applies in particular to his assertion that Russia's conversion to Christianity was accompanied by a Russo-Byzantine agreement, according to which the metropolitans of Kiev were to be appointed alternately from among Byzantines and Russians.

One of the purposes of this article is to discover whether, in the absence of direct corroborative evidence, the relevant sources, Byzantine and Russian, provide any indication that such an agreement may, in fact, have existed. Its other, and more general, aim is to reconsider, in the light of Gregoras' testimony, the problem of how the primates of the Russian Church were, from the eleventh to the mid-fourteenth century, actually appointed. These two aims may best be achieved by an attempt to answer three separate questions:

1. Can any regular alternation in the nationality of the metropolitans of Kiev be detected in this period?
2. Is the existence of an agreement such as that attested by Gregoras

<sup>42</sup> Guiland, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 38–43.

<sup>44</sup> Guiland, *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Hist. Byz.*, lib. xii, cap. 1, Bonn, II, p. 571.

consistent with our knowledge of the ecclesiastical relations between Byzantium and medieval Russia?

3. Is there any evidence suggesting that those primates of the Russian Church who, in this period, were not directly nominated by the authorities of Constantinople, were elected in Russia by the Russians themselves?

I propose to consider these questions with reference to two successive periods covered by the evidence of Gregoras: the two and a half centuries that elapsed between Russia's final conversion to Christianity in 988 or 989 and the Mongol invasion in the fourth decade of the thirteenth century; and the following century or so, from 1237 to 1354. And, for reasons of convenience which will become apparent in the course of this discussion, I shall consider the second period first.

## I

1. With regard to the period 1237–1354, the first question can be answered in the affirmative: the alternation referred to by Gregoras is strikingly evident; with remarkable regularity Byzantine and Russian candidates were appointed, in turn, to the metropolitan see of Kiev and All Russia: Joseph (1237–?), a Byzantine; Cyril (*ca.* 1249–81), a Russian; Maximus (1283–1305), a Byzantine; Peter (1308–26), a Russian; Theognostus (1328–53), a Byzantine; Alexius (1354–78), a Russian; the list is complete and speaks for itself.<sup>47</sup>

2. Was this alternation fortuitous? Historians of the Russian Church seem to have shown a singular reluctance to ask themselves this question. E. Golubinsky, for example, regarded the appointment of the Russian candidates in this period as due to a historical accident – the unwillingness of Byzantine prelates to face the rigors and dangers of a prolonged residence in Kiev, devastated by the Mongols in 1240 – which, in his opinion, caused the East Roman authorities to agree to the appointment of a Russian primate *ca.* 1249, and subsequently to accept on several occasions a repetition of this precedent.<sup>48</sup> Quite apart, however, from the lack of any evidence that the Byzantine churchmen of the period were quite so pusillanimous,<sup>49</sup> Golubinsky's explanation by-passes the main issue – the regular alternation in the nationality of the metropolitans of Kiev for nearly a century and a half.

<sup>47</sup> For the careers of these metropolitans, see Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 50–225; Ammann, *op. cit.*, pp. 57–61, 78–84, 92–9.

<sup>48</sup> Golubinsky, *ibid.*, pp. 50–1, 104–5.

<sup>49</sup> It is noteworthy that according to Byzantine Canon Law, a bishop who refuses to minister to the spiritual needs of the diocese entrusted to his care falls under the sentence of excommunication for as long as he persists in his refusal (36th Apostolic Canon: G. Rhalles and M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*, II [Athens, 1852], p. 48).



Another Russian historian, T. Barsov, facing the problem more squarely, expressed the view that this alternation was not adventitious, but was due to the desire of the Byzantine authorities to retain their hold over the Russian Church without offending the national susceptibilities of the Russians.<sup>50</sup> He did not, however, raise the question as to whether this arrangement was the outcome of a self-perpetuating agreement, or the result of a series of *ad hoc* concessions made by the Byzantines to the Russian authorities. The connection between the alternation in the nationality of the primates of the Russian Church from 1237 to 1378 and Gregoras' evidence is obvious. It is possible, of course, that our historian, or the source he used, was merely inferring, from the fact that for the previous century and more Byzantines and Russians had regularly succeeded one another as metropolitans of Russia, the existence of a formal agreement on this point between the two countries, rationalizing, in other words, a *de facto* situation. Yet it does not seem likely that an arrangement that operated so regularly and for so long was the result of chance, or even of a series of *ad hoc* agreements between the authorities of Byzantium and Russia. It is thus probable that Gregoras was right in postulating the existence of a general agreement between the two countries which was effective during the period from 1237 to 1378.

It will be remembered that Gregoras asserts that this agreement was concluded at the time of Russia's conversion to Christianity in the late tenth century. The reliability of this part of his evidence will be discussed later. It may, however, be stated here that the apparent absence of any regular alternation in the nationality of the metropolitans of Kiev before 1237 permits us to inquire whether this agreement between Byzantium and Russia could have been concluded in the first half of the thirteenth century. There exists, of course, no direct evidence on this point, but it is tempting to assume a connection between the regular practice of appointing Russians to the metropolitan see of Kiev and the policy of granting wide ecclesiastical concessions to the other Slavonic satellites of the Empire, a policy pursued by the Byzantine authorities during their residence in Nicaea, and exemplified by the foundation of the autocephalous Archbishopric of Serbia in 1219 and by the recognition of the Patriarchate of Bulgaria in 1235.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> *Konstantinopol'sky patriarkh i ego vlast' nad russkoy tserkov'yu* (St. Petersburg, 1878), pp. 461-4.

<sup>51</sup> On the foundation of the Archbishopric of Serbia in 1219 and the establishment of the Bulgarian Patriarchate in 1235, see M. Spinka, *A History of Christianity in the Balkans* (Chicago, 1933), pp. 84-8, 110-2; G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 382-3, 388-9.

3. It is natural to inquire whether the circumstances in which the metropolitans of Kiev and All Russia were appointed in this period can shed any light upon the problem under discussion. Nothing of particular interest is known about the appointment of the Byzantine prelates, Joseph, Maximus, and Theognostus, who were sent to Russia by the Patriarch, the first from Nicaea, the other two from Constantinople.<sup>52</sup> But on the election of the Russian candidates, Cyril, Peter, and Alexius, we are better informed; and the conclusions we can draw from contemporary sources are not without interest.

The Metropolitan Cyril, who was probably a monk of West Russian origin, was chosen by Prince Daniel of Galicia, the most powerful of the Russian rulers of his time, was sent to Nicaea *ca.* 1246 to be consecrated by the Patriarch as metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia, and returned, duly invested, a few years later.<sup>53</sup> There is no suggestion in the sources that the appointment of a native candidate, nominated by a Russian sovereign, was in any way unusual, or that the Patriarch opposed it on canonical or other grounds.

The election, and subsequent career, of the Metropolitan Peter provide us with a few more significant facts. Upon the death of the Greek Metropolitan Maximus in 1305, the Russian abbot Gerontius went to Constantinople, hoping and expecting to be consecrated metropolitan of All Russia by the Patriarch. There is no doubt that Gerontius was the candidate put forward for this office by the senior Russian ruler, Prince Michael of Tver', who at that time held the title of Grand Duke of Vladimir.<sup>54</sup> Simultaneously Prince George of Galicia sent a candidate of his own to Constantinople, with the request that he be consecrated metropolitan of Galicia: this was the Abbot Peter, a native of Western Russia. The Patriarch Athanasius decided otherwise: he rejected Gerontius' candidature, and instead consecrated Peter metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia (1308).<sup>55</sup> A curious, yet significant, interpretation of the attitude of the Byzantine authorities to these two Russian candidates can be found in the *Vita* of the Metropolitan Peter (who was subsequently canonized by the Russian Church) composed by Cyprian, Metropolitan of All Russia (1390–1406). According to

<sup>52</sup> See Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 50, 90, 146–7.

<sup>53</sup> The sources, and the somewhat uncertain chronology, relating to the election and consecration of the Metropolitan Cyril are discussed by Golubinsky (*ibid.*, pp. 51–4) and Sokolov (*Russky arkhierей iz Vizantii*, pp. 159–63). Cyril's early career is not precisely known: Golubinsky (*ibid.*, p. 53) and Vernadsky (*The Mongols and Russia*, p. 147) take him to have been a monk in the region of Galicia and Volynia; Ammann (*op. cit.*, p. 58) believes, on somewhat inadequate grounds, that he had been the bishop of Chelm (Kholm) in Galicia.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 99–101; Sokolov, *op. cit.*, pp. 218–24.

<sup>55</sup> Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 101–5.

Cyprian, the Patriarch rejected the candidature of Gerontius because he had been elected by the Russian secular authorities: "it is unlawful," he is said to have declared, "for laymen to make elections to the episcopate."<sup>56</sup> If the right of "election" is taken to mean the right (of the Russian rulers) to put forward their own candidates for the office of metropolitan, it is probable that the Patriarch said no such thing. His acceptance of Peter's candidature shows that he recognized this right. It has long been clear that Cyprian's account of these events is biased, since during his tenure of the metropolitan office he fought, with only partial success, this very practice whereby the Russian rulers submitted their own candidates for the primatial see.<sup>57</sup> His bias appears further in his account of Peter's consecration: on Peter's arrival in Constantinople, he states, the Patriarch "summons the synod of the most holy metropolitans and proceeds to elect [Peter] in the customary manner."<sup>58</sup> This is a perfectly accurate description of the formal election of a metropolitan by the Patriarchal Synod in Constantinople, the *σύνδος ἐνδημοῦσα*, and it conforms to the practice current in the Byzantine Church in the Middle Ages.<sup>59</sup> But in this case the formal election by the supreme authorities of the Byzantine Church was preceded by Peter's nomination (though to a see different from the one to which he was eventually appointed) by a Russian sovereign, and Cyprian is clearly at pains to reconcile Peter's free election by the Patriarchal Synod with the distasteful fact that he was recommended by a secular ruler.<sup>60</sup> Further, it is curious that Cyprian himself involuntarily suggests that the right of the Russian princes to put forward their own candidates for the office of metropolitan was widely recognized at the time: Gerontius, he tells us, "went to Constantinople, as if he already had what he expected."<sup>61</sup> The same conclusion emerges from the subsequent relations of the Metropolitan Peter with the Byzantine See. On his return to Russia Peter became the friend and supporter of the Prince of Moscow, George (1304–25), an association which led the Metropolitan, in the last years of his life, to transfer, at the instigation of George's successor Ivan I (1325–41), his residence from Vladimir to

<sup>56</sup> *Kniga Steppennaya Tsarskago Rodosloviya*: in *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisey*, 21 (St. Petersburg, 1908), p. 325.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Sokolov, *op. cit.*, pp. 219, 347, 451, 473; Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 145, note 1.

<sup>58</sup> *Kniga Steppennaya*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 51–2, 53.

<sup>60</sup> He attempts to do so by suggesting that prince George of Galicia, concealing from Peter the fact that he had nominated him for the office of metropolitan, sent him to Constantinople ostensibly for a different purpose, and secretly requested the Patriarch and his synod to appoint him. Golubinsky has no difficulty in showing how improbable this suggestion is (*op. cit.*, II, 1, p. 103, note 1).

<sup>61</sup> *Kniga Steppennaya*, *loc. cit.*, p. 324.

Moscow. Peter's close collaboration with the Prince of Moscow brought him into conflict with the latter's rival and enemy, Michael of Tver', who, about 1311, wrote to the Patriarch of Constantinople, requesting that Peter be brought to judgment for infringing ecclesiastical discipline.<sup>62</sup> The Patriarch Niphon wrote back to Michael, suggesting that the Russian metropolitan be tried in Constantinople, and, if found guilty, dismissed; in such a case, the Patriarch states, "we will appoint another [metropolitan], whomsoever your Piety desires."<sup>63</sup> If the Byzantine Patriarchate, always so anxious to maintain a strong hold over the Russian Church, could make so explicit an offer, we may conclude that it did not regard the nomination of a native candidate by the Russian sovereign as outrageous or unusual.

Peter seems to have weathered this storm successfully, and his position grew stronger when Michael of Tver' met his death at the Golden Horde in 1319. The next Russian to be appointed as metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia was Alexius.<sup>64</sup>

The circumstances that accompanied the nomination, election and appointment of the Metropolitan Alexius are so curious, and their relation to the testimony of Nicephorus Gregoras is so suggestive, that they warrant a fairly detailed discussion.<sup>65</sup> The son of a Russian nobleman of high rank, himself the godson of the Grand Duke of Moscow Ivan I Kalita, Alexius had lived as a monk in a monastery in Moscow for over twenty years when he was appointed, in 1340, by his sovereign and by the Metropolitan Theognostus as the latter's coadjutor, with the prospective right of succession to the primacy. In 1352 Theognostus, whose health had deteriorated, consecrated him Bishop of Vladimir, again on the understanding that Alexius would succeed him as metropolitan of All Russia. In the meantime, Theognostus and the Grand Duke of Moscow, Symeon, had sent an embassy to Constantinople to request the Patriarch and the Emperor to sanction Alexius' candidature. When the embassy returned to Moscow in July 1353, Theognostus and Symeon were both dead. Thereupon Alexius left for Con-

<sup>62</sup> The accusations put forward against the Metropolitan Peter are discussed by Golubinsky (*ibid.*, pp. 113-15).

<sup>63</sup> *Pamyatniki drevne-russkogo kanonicheskogo prava*, part 1 (2nd ed., St. Petersburg, 1908): *Russkaya Istoricheskaya Biblioteka*, vol. 6, 2nd ed., no. 16, col. 149.

<sup>64</sup> A strange, and not well authenticated, action is ascribed to the Metropolitan Peter by the anonymous author of his fourteenth-century *Vita*. Shortly before his death, Peter is alleged to have nominated as metropolitan a certain Archimandrite Theodore (Metropolitan Makary, *Istoriya russkoy tserkvi*, IV [St. Petersburg, 1886], p. 315). Theodore's identity, origin and fate are quite unknown, and, if true, this statement may mean that Peter nominated not his successor (as Golubinsky, *ibid.*, pp. 145-6, believes), but the candidate to the metropolitan see of Galicia. (See Sokolov, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-4.)

<sup>65</sup> For an account of Alexius' appointment, see Golubinsky, *ibid.*, pp. 171, ff.; Sokolov, *ibid.*, pp. 285-353.

stantinople, expecting, as the Russian sources imply, to be appointed metropolitan.

Alexius remained in Constantinople for a whole year; during much of this time, one is led to suppose, the Byzantine authorities scrutinized his credentials and discussed his suitability. Finally, on June 30, 1354, a decree of the Synod of the Church of Constantinople, signed by the Patriarch Philotheus, formally appointed him metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia. It is a remarkable document.<sup>66</sup> After a preamble which states that the Church of Constantinople holds the metropolitan diocese of Kiev and All Russia in particular honor because of Russia's numerous inhabitants, the preeminence of the power of its king (*ὑπεροχῇ ῥηγικῆς ἐξουσίας*), and the presence near its borders of a large pagan population,<sup>67</sup> the decree hints rather darkly at "the ways, diverse and most appropriate to the needs of its administration" (*κατὰ τοὺς πολυειδεῖς καὶ ἀρίστους τρόπους τῶν οἰκονομιῶν αὐτῆς*), in which the See of Constantinople had in the past appointed (*ἐγκατέστησε*) the primates of the Russian Church; "similarly" (*ὁμοίως*) it had now attempted to find a suitable candidate for this post among the clerics of Constantinople; its choice, however, had fallen upon Alexius, who "was born and brought up" in Russia (*ἐκεῖσε γεννηθεὶς καὶ τραφεὶς*),<sup>68</sup> because of his piety and virtue, and also because he had been recommended for this office by the late Metropolitan Theognostus. The final decision of the Patriarch and his synod, reached after a careful examination lasting a whole year (*ἐξετάσει δεδοκότες ἀκριβεστάτη ἐπὶ ὁλόκληρον ἤδη ἐνιαυτόν*), was influenced, too, by favorable reports on Alexius obtained from Byzantine visitors to Russia and Russian visitors to Constantinople, and also by the fact that "the great King" (*ὁ μέγας ῥήξ*) of Russia, i.e. the Grand Duke of Moscow, Ivan II, wrote to the Emperor, John Cantacuzenus, in support of his candidature. The decree then adds the following comment: "although this is by no means customary nor safe for the Church, yet in view of these trustworthy and commendatory reports, and of his virtuous and godly mode of

<sup>66</sup> The text is printed in *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani*, I, pp. 336–40.

<sup>67</sup> There is a curious similarity between this passage of the synodal decree and some of Gregoras' references to Russia: both Philotheus and Gregoras describe the Russian people as *πολύανθρωπος* (cf. Gregoras, *Hist. Byz.*, lib. xxviii, cap. 35, Bonn, III, p. 199; elsewhere, Gregoras calls the Russians *ἔθνος πολυανθρωπότατον*: lib. xxxvi, cap. 21, *ibid.*, p. 512); both give the Grand Duke of Moscow the title of *ῥήξ* (Gregoras, *ibid.*, cap. 28, p. 515); both refer to the pagan neighbors of Russia, the Lithuanians, as fire-worshippers (*πυρσολάτραι*: *Acta Patr. Constant.*, *loc. cit.*, p. 336; *γένος πυρσολατρῶν*: *Hist. Byz.*, *ibid.*, cap. 26, p. 514).

<sup>68</sup> The words *ἐκεῖσε γεννηθεὶς καὶ τραφεὶς*, used in the synodal decree, are strikingly reminiscent of Gregoras' expression *ἐκ τῶν τῇδε φύντων ὁμοῦ καὶ τραφέντων*, which occurs in the passage referring to the alternate nationality of the metropolitans of Russia (cf. *supra*, note 10). They may also be compared to Gregoras' statement that the Metropolitan Theognostus *ἐφν τε καὶ τέθραπται* in Constantinople (*Hist. Byz.*, *loc. cit.*, cap. 30, p. 516).

life, we have decided that this shall be, but in respect only of the Lord Alexius; and we by no means permit nor concede that any other person of Russian origin should in the future become the primate (ἀρχιερέα) in that country; on the contrary [the primates of Russia are to be chosen] from [among the clergy of] the . . . city of Constantinople.”<sup>69</sup> The Patriarch interposes a recommendation to his successors to abide, when making future appointments to the see of Kiev and All Russia, by this ruling, and declares that Alexius, appointed in full conformity with the canons and laws of the Church, will take possession of his new see “just as though he were from here.”<sup>70</sup>

One is immediately struck by two features of this synodal decree: the Patriarch’s obvious desire to satisfy the demands of the Muscovite authorities; and his assertion that Alexius’ appointment to the see of Kiev and All Russia “is by no means customary nor safe for the Church.” The first feature can be easily explained by the political and ecclesiastical situation in eastern Europe in the middle of the fourteenth century. Moscow, which after the death of the Metropolitan Peter in 1326 had become *de facto* the ecclesiastical capital of Russia, was at that time emerging as the one political center east of the Lithuanian border capable of acting as an effective rallying point for the rising national consciousness of the Russian people and, as events were soon to prove, of successfully challenging the hitherto impregnable power of the Golden Horde. Its princes, who had embarked with the blessing of the Church and the support of their *boyars* on the policy of “gathering” the whole of eastern Russia under their sway, were becoming increasingly powerful and rich. It is not surprising that the Byzantine authorities; whose realm, weakened by the civil war between John Palaeologus and John Cantacuzenus, hemmed in on land by its enemies, the Turks and the Serbs, and disabled on sea by the encroachments of the Genoese and Venetians, faced financial ruin; were ready in 1354 to lend a favorable ear to the demands of an allied and satellite state from which military and economic assistance could be expected — the Grand Duchy of Muscovy and its μέγας ρήξ.<sup>71</sup> The policy of granting concessions to Russia was further

<sup>69</sup> Ἡμεῖς, εἰ καὶ οὐδὲν ἦν σύνηθες διόλου οὐδὲ ἀσφαλὲς τοῦτο τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ὁμως διὰ τὰς ἀξιοπίστους καὶ συστατικὰς ταύτας μαρτυρίας καὶ τὴν ἐνάρετον καὶ θεάρεστον αὐτοῦ ἀγωγὴν διεκρίναμεν τοῦτο γενέσθαι, πλὴν εἰς αὐτὸν δὴ τοῦτον καὶ μόνον τὸν κύρ’ Ἀλέξιον, οὐ μὴν δὴ παραχωροῦμεν, οὐδὲ ἐνδιδοάμεν ὅλως ἕτερόν τινα εἰς τὸ ἐξῆς ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥωσίας ορμώμενον ἀρχιερέα ἐκεῖσε γενέσθαι, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ ταύτης τῆς θεοδοξάστου καὶ θεομεγαλύντου καὶ εὐδαίμονος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως . . . : *Acta Patr. Constant.*, loc. cit., p. 337.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>71</sup> On the financial crisis of the Empire in the mid-fourteenth century, see Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, pp. 469–70. It is not impossible that a connection existed between the Russian support for Alexius’ candidature and the money sent *ca.* 1350 by the

necessitated by the ecclesiastical situation. Now that the political fabric of the Byzantine state was irretrievably shattered, the Patriarch of Constantinople was the only force capable of championing the traditional claims of the East Roman Empire to hegemony over the whole of Eastern Christendom.<sup>72</sup> But in 1354 the position of the Byzantine Patriarchate in Eastern Europe was gravely compromised: the Serbian Church, since the establishment of the Serbian Patriarchate by Stephen Dušan in 1346, was in open revolt against the mother Church of Constantinople; the Church of Bulgaria was likewise challenging its authority; its patriarch had recently enabled the monk Theodoretus to gain possession of the see of Kiev, in open defiance of the Patriarch of Constantinople; and Olgerd, Grand Duke of Lithuania, was, it seems, threatening to subject the Orthodox population of his realm to the jurisdiction of the Pope.<sup>73</sup> The Patriarch Philotheus was fully alive to this danger and to his responsibilities; and during his first tenure of the patriarchal office (1354–5) and especially during his second (1364–76), he strove, with singular energy and remarkable success, to reunite the Orthodox peoples of eastern Europe by a common loyalty to the See of Constantinople.<sup>74</sup> It is hence not surprising that, in appointing the Russian candidate Alexius to the see of Kiev and All Russia in 1354, Philotheus was concerned to placate the Grand Duke of Moscow who was virtually the only sovereign in eastern Europe to remain, at that time, in communion with the Byzantine Church.

Why, then, this grudging acceptance of Alexius' candidature, and the Patriarch's observation that his appointment "is by no means customary nor safe for the Church" (εἰ καὶ οὐδὲν ἦν σύνηθες διόλου οὐδὲ ἀσφαλὲς τοῦτο τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ)? This question can best be answered by considering Philotheus' views on the government of the Church. By upbringing and conviction Philotheus — like Callistus who both preceded and followed him on the patriarchal throne (1350–4; 1355–63) — belonged to the party of "zealots" in the Byzantine Church, which, in opposition to the "politicians" or "moderates," had fought for centuries against state interference in eccle-

Grand Duke Symeon of Moscow for the repair of St. Sophia. Cf. note 24.

<sup>72</sup> The classic expression of these claims can be found in the letter written between 1394 and 1397 by Anthony IV, Patriarch of Constantinople, to Basil I of Moscow: *Acta Patr. Constant.*, II, pp. 188–92; cf. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, p. 492.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Spinka, *A History of Christianity in the Balkans*, pp. 117–8, 141–3; Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 179–81; Sokolov, *op. cit.*, pp. 361–2.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. O. Halecki, "Un empereur de Byzance à Rome. Vingt ans de travail pour l'union des Eglises et pour la défense de l'Empire d'Orient, 1355–75," *Rozprawy Historyczne Towarzystwa Naukowego Warszawskiego*, 8 (Warsaw, 1930), pp. 179–80, 235–42.

siastical affairs.<sup>75</sup> As a leading hesychast and a former monk of Mount Athos, Philotheus rose to prominence among the "zealots," who gained a decisive and lasting victory over their opponents when the teaching of Gregory Palamas was officially recognized by the Byzantine Church in the middle of the fourteenth century. An important feature of the zealots' program was their insistence on the freedom of ecclesiastical appointments: and Philotheus himself was elected to the patriarchate in 1354 after his party had wrested from the Emperor John Cantacuzenus a public apology for having, in the past, engineered the election of his own nominees to the patriarchal throne, and an implied condemnation of the majority of the former emperors for doing the same.<sup>76</sup>

Now from the standpoint of the zealots the appointment of the Metropolitan Alexius suffered from specific and obvious defects. Their nature can be inferred by considering three documents issued by the Patriarchal Chancellery between 1397 and *ca.* 1401, which contain a particularly clear exposition of the zealots' view on ecclesiastical appointments. In the first, the Patriarch Anthony IV roundly rebukes a monk of Thessalonica for allowing the clergy and civil authorities (*κληρικῶν καὶ ἀρχόντων*) of that city to petition the Patriarch to appoint him as their metropolitan. The Patriarch objects not to the candidate as such, but to the attempt of the authorities of Thessalonica to by-pass the rules of canonical election.<sup>77</sup> These rules are stated more clearly in the second document, in which the Patriarch Matthew censures the clergy of Anchialus for asking him to appoint as archbishop of their city a candidate of their own choice. Canon law, he reminds them, requires that the election be made by the bishops of the synod of Constantinople; they are to select three names, of which the patriarch chooses one, and he then consecrates the elected person; the patriarch has no right to suggest any name to the synod before the election; as for the clergy of Anchialus, all they may legitimately do is to recommend a given candidate to the synod and to the Patriarch; the Patriarch concludes this somewhat casuistic exhortation by promising to appoint their candidate, provided he is one of those elected by the synod.<sup>78</sup> The third document is a reply of the Patriarch Matthew to the Emperor of Trebizond who had requested him to appoint a local candidate as metropolitan of the city. The synod, the Patriarch writes, decided, after a careful study

<sup>75</sup> On the "zealot" and the "moderate" parties in the Byzantine Church, see A. Vasilev, *History of the Byzantine Empire* (Madison, 1952), pp. 659-71.

<sup>76</sup> See the remarkable speech made by the Emperor to the synod of Constantinople: John Cantacuzenus, *Historiae*, lib. iv, cap. 37 (Bonn, 1832), III, pp. 272-5.

<sup>77</sup> *Acta Patr. Constant.*, II, pp. 275-6 (March, 1397).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 345-7 (February, 1400).



of the Emperor's petitionary letter, to send it back; out of "friendship and love" for the Emperor and respect for the candidate's qualities, it is prepared to grant the request, but only on condition that the Emperor send another letter, in which he would recommend the candidate in general terms, without mentioning the see of Trebizond; for a recommendation for a specific see *pro persona* (περὶ προσώπου) is contrary to a strict interpretation of the canons (παρὰ τὴν κανονικὴν ἀκρίβειάν ἐστίν).<sup>79</sup>

These curious documents suggest that at the turn of the fourteenth century, the "zealot" party in the Byzantine Church was finding considerable difficulty in reconciling its principle of free elections to high ecclesiastical offices with the opposing claims of the sees dependent on Constantinople, and in attempting to eradicate the tendency of local authorities, secular and religious, to propose their own candidates to these offices, in accordance with a practice which the Byzantine Patriarchate, for reasons of expediency, had countenanced in former times.

We may safely assume that the same difficulty faced the Patriarch Philotheus in 1354. Alexius had been explicitly recommended for the post of metropolitan of Russia by the Muscovite authorities to Philotheus' predecessor Callistus and to the Emperor John Cantacuzenus. He had further been nominated as prospective metropolitan by his predecessor Theognostus, an act which came dangerously near to infringing Canon Law.<sup>80</sup> And the pressure which had clearly been exerted on the Byzantine authorities by the Grand Duke of Moscow in support of Alexius could scarcely commend itself to a patriarch who headed the party which insisted on strictness (ἀκρίβεια) in the application of Canon Law, and was opposed to the interference of the secular power in ecclesiastical appointments.

It remains to consider the last objection voiced by Philotheus to Alexius' candidature: the fact that he was a Russian by birth and education. It is probable that the Patriarch, in stressing this fact, was moved, not by racial or national prejudice, but by the realization that a Russian candidate implied the patronage of a Russian sovereign and hence a capitulation to outside, secular pressure. This is hinted at in the synodal decree of 1354, which states that future appointments to the see of All Russia are to be made

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 541-3. The letter is undated, but it appears to have been written *ca.* 1401. Cf. the remarks on these three documents by Sokolov, *op. cit.*, pp. 342-4.

<sup>80</sup> The Canon Law of the Eastern Church inhibits a dying bishop from consecrating his successor (*Nomocanon XIV titularum*, tit. I, cap. 18, citing the seventy-sixth Apostolic Canon: Rhallés and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, I, p. 56). Balsamon, commenting on this clause, cites the example of a twelfth-century metropolitan of Philippopolis who wished to resign on condition that the Patriarchal Synod appointed his own candidate as his successor; his request was refused. (*Ibid.*, II, p. 99).

without outside assistance (μηδενὸς ἐτέρωθεν προσδεόμενον).<sup>81</sup> The decision not to tolerate the election of any more Russian metropolitans after Alexius was to prove quite ineffectual, for during the six years that elapsed after the death of Alexius in 1378, the Byzantine Patriarchate agreed on three different occasions to the appointment of a native metropolitan of Russia.<sup>82</sup> Philotheus' appeal to the past was equally unfortunate: for, in view of the fact that for the past hundred years there had been as many Russian as Byzantine occupants of the see of Kiev and All Russia, his assertion that the appointment of a native Russian to this post was "by no means customary," was, to say the least, an exaggeration. The acts of the fourteenth-century synods of Constantinople are, to be sure, sometimes at variance with historical fact; and one cannot but suspect that in the decree of 1354, couched in the expert phraseology of East Roman diplomacy, Philotheus and his synod, in their desire to safeguard the freedom of ecclesiastical elections, and to retain a strict hold over the Muscovite Church, were trying to introduce a new principle in the appointment of the metropolitans of Russia by willfully ignoring the realities of the past.

What, then, were these realities of the past? It will be observed that the testimony of the Patriarch Philotheus and that of Nicephorus Gregoras, which are almost exactly contemporary, contradict each other on at least one essential point: the Patriarch, in defiance of historical truth, writes of the appointment of a native metropolitan of Russia as if it were a dangerous innovation; Gregoras asserts that the Byzantine authorities had formally agreed in the past to alternate elections of Greek and Russian prelates to the see of Kiev; he does not, it is true, tell us explicitly that this agreement was kept, but the context and tenor of his words suggest that he still regarded it, at the time of writing, as at least theoretically in force.

Because Philotheus made a false statement, it does not of course necessarily follow that Gregoras was speaking the truth. However, if the contradiction in their evidence is related to their opposing views on ecclesiastical matters, we may discover an added reason for giving credit to the

<sup>81</sup> *Acta Patr. Constant.*, I, p. 338.

<sup>82</sup> These native metropolitans were Michael (1378-9), Pimen (1380-9) and Dionysius (1384-5). Cf. *Acta Patr. Constant.*, II, pp. 12-8, 116-29. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 226-60. The separate metropolitan dioceses of Lithuania and Galicia, created in the reign of Andronicus II (1282-1328), and abolished and restored several times in the course of the fourteenth century, were frequently presided over by local primates, recognized by the Byzantine Patriarchate. Cf. Golubinsky, *ibid.*, pp. 96-7, 125-30, 147, 153-4, 157-62, 190-3, 206-14, 342-4. How powerless Philotheus was to carry out his intention of appointing Byzantines to metropolitan sees situated beyond the confines of the Empire is shown by the fact that a few months after Alexius' appointment he consecrated Roman, the candidate and a relative by marriage of the Grand Duke Olgerd, to the see of Lithuania.

latter. It was not only on the theological issue of Hesychasm that Gregoras was strongly opposed to the Palamite Patriarch who had convened the Synod of June, 1354, and appointed Alexius to the see of Kiev. Their views on Church administration seem to have differed as sharply. Philotheus, it has been shown, was a leading member of the "zealot" party in the Byzantine Church, which resisted state interference in ecclesiastical affairs, and fought for the freedom of ecclesiastical appointments. Gregoras occupied an equally prominent position in the opposing party of "moderates" or "politicians" who were traditionally inclined to accept Imperial patronage in the affairs of the Church and, in accordance with the accommodating principle of economy (*οἰκονομία*), believed that the Church, in its relations with the State, should not intransigently reject all concessions and compromises.<sup>ng 82a</sup> If the Byzantine authorities had ever conceded the principle that every other metropolitan of Kiev was to be a native candidate, selected by the Russian authorities, secular and ecclesiastical, it is not surprising that the "zealot" party, obliged by the force of circumstances to sanction Alexius' appointment in 1354, should have desired to "hush up" this agreement, just as they suppressed the fact that for the past century Byzantines and Russians had regularly succeeded each other as primates of the Russian Church. For the "moderates," however, the existence of such an agreement, apart from its intrinsic interest, would have been a vindication of their program, and a proof that the continued loyalty of the Russian Church to the See of Constantinople was the result of a policy of conciliation and reasonable concessions pursued by the former patriarchs and emperors of East Rome. Thus it seems at least possible that Gregoras, who had no reason to feel well-disposed towards the instigators of the Synod of 1354, countered its attempt to suppress the true facts by drawing attention to the existence of an agreement between Russia and the Empire, concluded, as he himself states, "in order that the link between the two nations, thus secured and ratified, might forever preserve the unity of faith pure and undefiled, and find an increased stability for its existence and its strength."

This survey of the ecclesiastical relations between Byzantium and Russia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries may therefore, I suggest, lead us to the following conclusions: From 1237 to 1378 the alternate succession of Byzantine and Russian metropolitans of Kiev is regular and striking. No direct evidence, however, can be found to corroborate Gregoras' assertion that there existed a formal agreement between the two countries, regulating this succession. However, the willingness of the Byzantine authorities in this period to recognize the right of Russian princes to nominate, from time to time, native candidates for this office, the nuga-

tory evasions of the Synod of 1354, Gregoras' knowledge and experience of ecclesiastical affairs, his well-informed interest in the Russian Church, and his sympathy for the policy of diplomatic concessions, traditionally applied by the East Roman statesmen in their dealings with the Empire's satellites, may be regarded as arguments indirectly supporting his clear and categorical statement.

## II

Let us now bring Gregoras' evidence to bear on the two and a half centuries prior to 1237, and attempt to answer, in respect of the Kievan period of Russian history, the three questions we have considered with regard to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

1. Can any regular alternation between Byzantine and native primates of the Russian Church be detected from Vladimir's conversion in the late tenth century to 1237? <sup>83</sup> The answer to this question can only be a negative one. In the first place, the list of these primates that can be collated from contemporary documents and later catalogues <sup>84</sup> is almost certainly incomplete, and the exact dates of the tenure of office of more than half of them are unknown. Furthermore, of the twenty and more primates of the Russian Church of the Kievan period whose names have come down to us, <sup>85</sup> there are only three whose nationality is explicitly attested in contemporary sources; of these two were Russians, one a Byzantine. <sup>86</sup> The origin of several others, as we shall see, can be inferred, but often without assurance and generally only with the help of later and sometimes questionable documents. Finally, in view of the chequered history of Russo-Byzan-

<sup>83</sup> There is some doubt as to the place of residence, and the title, of the primates of the Russian Church before 1037. Contemporary sources imply, without conclusive clarity, that they resided in Pereyaslav' and that some of them at least bore the title of archbishop. On the first point see Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, I, 1, pp. 328-9; on the second point, see Dvornik, *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe*, p. 176. After 1037, however, the primates of the Russian Church were certainly the metropolitans of Kiev: *Povest'*, s.a. 1037, 1039; Cross, pp. 137-8.

<sup>84</sup> On these later catalogues of Russian metropolitans, compiled between the fourteenth and the eighteenth centuries, see Golubinsky, *ibid.*, pp. 284-5, note.

<sup>85</sup> Golubinsky (*ibid.*, pp. 281-9) lists twenty-three primates of the Russian Church up to the year 1237, whose existence he regards as well, or fairly well, authenticated. The names of six or seven others, either ambiguously alluded to in contemporary sources, or mentioned in later and not always unimpeachable documents, could be accepted, or rejected, only after further investigation. A systematic study of the later lists of Russian metropolitans has yet to be made.

<sup>86</sup> The two indubitably Russian metropolitans were Hilarion (1051-ca. 1054) and Clement (1147-55); the Byzantine one was Cyril II (1224-33) whose Greek origin is attested by the Laurentian and the Novgorod chronicles: *Lavrentievskaya Letopis'*, s.a. 1224: *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisey*, I (St. Petersburg, 1846), p. 190. *Novgorodskaya pervaya Letopis'*, s.a. 1233, ed. A. N. Nasonov (Moscow, Leningrad, 1950), p. 72.

tine relations in the eleventh and twelfth centuries it seems somewhat unlikely that a regular method of alternate succession could have operated successfully, even for limited periods. This in itself does not, of course, invalidate the evidence of Gregoras. Our historian, it will be recalled, merely states that an agreement regulating this succession was concluded between Byzantium and Russia. He does not say that it was kept.

2. Could such an agreement have been concluded at any time between Russia's conversion to Christianity and the beginning of the thirteenth century? A positive answer to this question seems unlikely to find ready acceptance among those historians who assume that the patriarchs of Constantinople, in their desire to keep the Russian Church under their control, invariably insisted, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, on appointing their own candidates to the see of Kiev. This widely-held assumption would seem to rest on three arguments:

(a) Contemporary sources, both Russian and Byzantine, appear to take it for granted that the metropolitans of Kiev were generally, in this period, chosen, appointed, and sent to Russia by the Patriarch of Constantinople.

(b) Since Russia was a metropolitan diocese of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Canon Law, in its contemporary Byzantine interpretation, required that the primates of Russia be nominated and consecrated by the Patriarch.

(c) The only metropolitans of Kiev of this period who, from contemporary evidence, are indubitably known to have been Russians, i.e. Hilarion and Clement, were elected in circumstances taken to imply that the Russians on these two occasions defied the authority of the Byzantine Patriarch.

I venture to suggest, however, that the first of these arguments is inconclusive, and that the other two, if examined without preconceived notions, do not justify the assumption that the Byzantine authorities in the eleventh and twelfth centuries vetoed, on principle, the appointment of Russian candidates to the see of Kiev.

The Russian chronicles, in relating the accession of a metropolitan of Kiev, frequently state that "he came" (*pride* or *prishel*) to Russia, generally adding "from Byzantium" (*iz Grek* or *iz Tsaryagrada*).<sup>87</sup> Similar assertions can be found in Byzantine sources: Nilos Doxapatres wrote in 1143 that "a metropolitan is sent [*στέλλεται*] to Russia by the Patriarch of Constantinople";<sup>88</sup> the Patriarch Lukas Chrysoberges, writing *ca.* 1161 to the Rus-

<sup>87</sup> *Povest'*, s.a. 1051, p. 107; Cross, p. 142. (George); *Laurentian Chronicle*, s.a. 1089 (John III), 1104 (Nicephorus), 1122 (Nicetas), 1156 (Constantine I); *Hypatian Chron.*, s.a. 1131 (Michael), 1161 (Theodore), 1164 (John IV); *First Novgorod Chron.*, s.a. 1167, ed. Nasonov, p. 32 (Constantine II).

<sup>88</sup> G. Parthey, *Hieroclis Synecdemus* (Berlin, 1866), p. 297; *P.G.*, cxxxii, col. 1105.

sian Prince Andrew Bogolyubsky, states even more explicitly: "we appoint from time to time [*po vremenom*] the holy metropolitans of All Russia . . . , we appoint and send them thither";<sup>89</sup> and John Cinnamus likewise asserts that Kiev, the metropolitan see of All Russia, is governed by a bishop from Byzantium (*ἀρχιερεὺς . . . ἐκ Βυζαντίου*).<sup>90</sup> What is the exact meaning of these expressions? It is possible — and, in the Russian documents, probable — that the fact of "coming" or "being sent" from Byzantium to Russia implies no more than a journey from Constantinople to Kiev, and that these words would have applied equally well to a native prelate, elected in Russia, and dispatched to Constantinople to be consecrated by the patriarch, who would then send him back to govern his new metropolitan diocese. The Greek statements, on the other hand, seem to imply more than this, and doubtless reflect a claim, put forward by the Patriarchate of Constantinople at various times in the twelfth century, to the exclusive right of nominating a Byzantine candidate to the see of Kiev. How little such protestations could on occasion accord with the true state of affairs is evident from the Patriarch Philotheus' synodal decree of 1354; and the suspicion that such statements of fact, to which the zealot party in the Byzantine Church was apt to resort, may have served to justify claims that could not always be made good, as well as the somewhat ambiguous terms in which these twelfth-century writers referred to the "sending" of the metropolitan from Constantinople to Russia, scarcely warrant the assumption that the appointment of a native Russian as primate of Kiev would in this period have been disallowed on principle by the East Roman authorities.

How far could the Patriarch of Constantinople claim the right to nominate the metropolitan of Kiev on the grounds of Canon Law? The question is complicated by the relative scarcity of unambiguous canonical rules prescribing the methods of election of metropolitans in the Byzantine Church, by the observable discrepancy between the ecclesiastical canons and the Imperial laws regulating episcopal elections, and by the peculiar interpretation given to both by the twelfth-century Byzantine canonists.

The provisions of Canon Law relating to the appointment of bishops were supposed, in Byzantium, to derive their origin and authority from the first Apostolic Canon: *ἐπίσκοπος χειροτονείσθω ὑπὸ ἐπισκόπων δύο ἢ τριῶν*.<sup>91</sup> In view of the interest which this canon aroused in Russia, where, as we

<sup>89</sup> Metropolitan Makary, *Istoriya russkoy tserkvi* (2nd ed., St. Petersburg, 1868), III, p. 298. The original document is not extant, and we have only an old Russian translation of it. Cf. V. Grumel, *Les Regestes des Actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, no. 1052, I, 3, pp. 114–15.

<sup>90</sup> Ioannes Cinnamus, *Histor.*, lib. v, cap. 12, ed. A. Meineke (Bonn, 1836), p. 236.

<sup>91</sup> G. Rhalles and M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II, p. 1.

shall see, it was on several occasions quoted, or misquoted, by those who held that the metropolitan of Kiev could be appointed by the Russian bishops, it is worth noting that, as late as the twelfth century, expert opinion in Byzantium was divided as to whether the verb *χειροτονείσθω* referred, in this context, to election or to consecration; Zonaras and Balsamon holding the latter view — with which modern scholars concur — but citing the opposite opinion, based on the fact that the term *χειροτονία* in the early Church generally meant “election.”<sup>92</sup>

The canons of the Church Councils which are concerned with episcopal appointments — notably the fourth and the sixth canons of the First Oecumenical Council, the nineteenth canon of the Synod of Antioch of 341, and the twelfth canon of the Synod of Laodicea — further emphasize and define the corporate nature of the electoral process:<sup>93</sup> A bishop is to be appointed by the bishops of the ecclesiastical province in which his future see is situated; the presence of at least three of them is required at the election, the others signifying their agreement by letter; the elected candidate is to be consecrated (*χειροτονείσθαι*) by the bishops; while the metropolitan of the province must ratify their decision, in accordance with his right of giving his endorsement (*τὸ κύρος*) to, or withholding it from, the election and the consecration.

Although these canons allow the metropolitan the right to exercise a general supervision over the appointment of a bishop, his essential prerogative remains that of ratifying the action of the bishops. He does not himself consecrate the elected candidate.<sup>94</sup> However, in the course of time, the Byzantine Church deviated from this canonical norm, and in the twelfth century we find the official commentators of these canons, Zonaras and Balsamon, attempting to reconcile the current Byzantine practice of having the newly-elected bishops consecrated by metropolitans with the Canon

<sup>92</sup> *In Can. I Ss. Apost., P. G.*, CXXXVII, cols. 36–7. For the different meanings of the ecclesiastical term *χειροτονία* in the first six centuries, see the valuable study by M. A. Siotis, *Die klassische und die christliche Cheirotonie in ihrem Verhältnis*, *Θεολογία*, Bd. 20 (1949), Heft 2–Bd. 22 (1951), Heft 2 [offprint] (Athens, 1951).

<sup>93</sup> See C. Hefele and H. Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, I, pp. 539–47, 552, 720, 1005.

<sup>94</sup> It is true that the twenty-fifth canon of the Council of Chalcedon appears to suggest that the metropolitans were responsible for the consecration of bishops: *ἐπειδὴ περ τινὲς τῶν μητροπολιτῶν, ὡς περιχρήθημεν, ἀμελοῦσι τῶν ἐγκεχειρισμένων αὐτοῖς ποιμνίων καὶ ἀναβάλλονται τὰς χειροτονίας τῶν ἐπισκόπων* . . . Hefele and Leclercq, II, p. 810. However, the fact that this canon was “deviating from the language used at Nicaea and Antioch” (C. H. Turner, *Studies in early Church History* [Oxford, 1912], p. 91) does not necessarily mean that it envisaged that the metropolitans were actually to consecrate bishops: the canons imply that the metropolitan was generally responsible for seeing that a vacant bishopric was to be filled in the proper manner, and his presence (*παρουσία*) at the consecration of a bishop is expressly required by the nineteenth canon of the Council of Antioch (341).

Law of the early Church, by resorting to a philological device: the terms *χειροτονία* and *κῦρος*, they claimed, refer in the canons cited above to election and consecration respectively. This equivocal interpretation enabled them to claim canonical authority for the practice followed in episcopal appointments in the centralized Byzantine Church of their time: the electoral body of bishops selected three candidates, one of whom was chosen by the metropolitan of the province, who gave his endorsement to the election, issued a declaration (*τὸ μήνυμα*) naming the bishop-elect, and finally bestowed on him the sacramental consecration (*ἡ χειροθεσία*).<sup>95</sup>

Alongside the canons of the Church, a number of laws issued by the emperors of East Rome prescribed the form of episcopal elections. One of their features is the part they ascribe to laymen in these elections. The foundation of this Imperial legislation is to be found in the 123rd and 137th novels of Justinian, which decreed that whenever a bishop is to be appointed, "the clergy and the leading citizens of the city" (*τοὺς κληρικοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους τῆς πόλεως*) for which the bishop is to be consecrated are to elect three persons (*ἐπὶ τρισὶ προσώποις ψηφίσματα ποιεῖν*), the final choice of candidate resting with "the prelate conferring the ordination" (*ἵνα . . . ὁ βελτίων χειροτονηθῇ τῇ ἐπιλογῇ καὶ τῷ κρίματι τοῦ χειροτονοῦντος*).<sup>96</sup> And the 123rd novel adds: "If, as happens in certain places, three eligible persons are not found, it will be in the power of the electors to elect two or even one person."<sup>97</sup>

Although Justinian's legislation on the election of bishops was included in the Byzantine *Nomocanons*, the discrepancy between the secular laws which envisaged the participation of laymen in these elections, and the ecclesiastical canons which restricted this right to bishops (and, indeed, in one case expressly forbade secular rulers to make elections to ecclesiastical offices<sup>98</sup>) tended in the course of time to undermine the authority of

<sup>95</sup> *In Can. IV Conc. Nicaen. I: P. G., CXXXVII, col. 236. In Can. XIX Conc. II Antioch.: ibid., col. 1328. In Can. XII Conc. Laod.: ibid., col. 1357-60.* — The ecclesiastical canons and Imperial laws regulating episcopal appointments in the Byzantine church are cited and discussed by I. I. Sokolov, "Izbranie arkhieriev v Vizantii," *Vizantiŭsky Vremennik*, 22 (1915-6), pp. 193-252.

<sup>96</sup> *Imp. Iustiniani Novellae quae vocantur sive constitutiones*. Ed. C. E. Zachariae v. Lingenthal, II (Leipzig, 1881 [Teubner]): Nov. 123, cap. 1, pp. 294-5; Nov. 137, cap. 2, p. 409. It is not suggested, of course, that it was Justinian who first gave the laity a voice in the election of bishops. In the post-Apostolic age, and at least until the fourth century, the lay community as a whole took an active part in episcopal elections. Justinian confined the electoral rights to the *πρώτοι τῆς πόλεως*, i.e. to the leading officials and to the holders of high civic positions. Cf. J. Pargoire, *L'Eglise byzantine de 527 à 847* (Paris, 1905), pp. 57-8.

<sup>97</sup> Nov. 123, cap. 1, *ibid.*, p. 296.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. the third canon of the Seventh Oecumenical Council: Rhallés and Potlès, *Σύνταγμα*, II, pp. 564-6.



the former, in virtue of the principle, upheld by the medieval canonists, that in cases of conflict a canon takes precedence over a law. Thus the twelfth-century canonists, Aristenes and Balsamon, asserted that the ordinance providing for the election of bishops by "the clergy and the leading citizens of the city" was no longer valid.<sup>99</sup> Nevertheless, there is evidence that Justinian's legislation on episcopal elections was at that time neither forgotten nor wholly discredited. It is remarkable that the provision relating to the election of bishops by "the clergy and the leading citizens of the city" was retained in the laws of the Macedonian emperors — in the *Procheiron*<sup>100</sup> and the *Epanagoge*,<sup>101</sup> as well as in the *Basilica*.<sup>102</sup> And in the twelfth century the authority commanded in Byzantium by Justinian's legislation was still sufficiently great to enable a Patriarch of Constantinople to press, albeit unsuccessfully and against his own synod, for the application of another clause of the 123rd novel, included in the *Nomocanon*, but not in the *Basilica*.<sup>103</sup>

Such conflicts between Canon Law and Imperial legislation could be resolved in different ways. Canonists such as Balsamon argued that, in the event of a conflict, the canon, possessing the double sanction of ecclesiastical authority and Imperial ratification, was to be preferred to the secular law.<sup>104</sup> The Emperor Leo VI, on the other hand, expounded in his seventh novel the view that when a secular law (*τῆς πολιτείας ὁ νόμος*) clashes with a canonical prescription (*ὁ ἱερὸς νόμος*) preference must be accorded to the one which is "more useful to the good order of things" (*λυσιτελέστερον τῇ εὐταξίᾳ τῶν πραγμάτων*).<sup>105</sup> This contrast between the rigorist and the empirical attitudes to Canon Law only reflects the perennial antagonism between the principles of *ἀκρίβεια* and *οἰκονομία*, championed in the Church and in the office of the Logothete of the Dromos by the "zealots" and "the politicians" respectively; an antagonism expressed, as we have seen, in

<sup>99</sup> Aristenes, *In Can. VI Conc. Sardic.: P. G.*, CXXXVII, col. 1449; cf. Balsamon's commentary on the twenty-third chapter of the first title of the *Nomocanon*: Rhallès and Potlès, *Σύνταγμα*, I, p. 60.

<sup>100</sup> *Prochiron Basilii, Constantini et Leonis*, tit. XXVIII, cap. 1, ed. C. E. Zachariae (Heidelberg, 1837), p. 155.

<sup>101</sup> *Epanagoge Legis Basilii et Leonis et Alexandri*, tit. VIII, cap. 3: *Collectio librorum juris Graeco-Romani ineditorum*, ed. C. E. Zachariae v. Lingenthal (Leipzig, 1852), pp. 77–8.

<sup>102</sup> *Basilica*, lib. III, tit. 1, cap. 8, ed. G. E. Heimbach (Leipzig, 1833), I, p. 93; ed. J. and P. Zepos (Athens, 1896), I, pp. 117–8.

<sup>103</sup> Rhallès and Potlès, *Σύνταγμα*, I, pp. 49–50. Cf. M. Krasnozhen, "Tolkovateli kanonicheskogo kodeksa Vostochnoy Tserkvi: Aristin, Zonara i Val'samon," *Uchenye Zapiski Imperator. Yur'evskogo Universiteta*, 1911, pp. 177–9.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Krasnozhen, *op. cit.*, pp. 241–2.

<sup>105</sup> *Les Nouvelles de Léon VI le Sage*, ed. and transl. by P. Noailles and A. Dain (Paris, 1944), p. 37.

the different ways in which the Patriarchate of Constantinople responded in the fourteenth century to the periodic attempts of the Russian authorities to put forward their own candidates for the post of metropolitan of Kiev. It seems fair to assume, therefore, that in the period under discussion Justinian's law providing for the election of bishops by the local ecclesiastical and secular authorities, though discounted by the canonists and condemned to gradual obsolescence, could yet, by virtue of its inclusion in the *Nomocanon* and especially in the *Basilica*, be cited by those who supported the policy of *οἰκονομία*.

Byzantine Canon Law recognized no difference in principle between elections of bishops and of metropolitans: canonically speaking the two processes are essentially analogous. The sixth canon of the Council of Sardica stipulated that "the appointment" (ἡ κατάστασις) of metropolitans was to be made by the bishops of the same, and also of the neighboring, dioceses.<sup>106</sup> However, the twelfth-century commentators of this canon, Aristenes, Zonaras and Balsamon, state that in their time the practice was different: according to Aristenes, metropolitans are elected by other metropolitans, while Balsamon asserts that they are no longer "appointed" (ἐγίνοντο) by bishops, but by the Patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>107</sup> However, the most important ecclesiastical document on this subject is the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon; the relevant passage states: "the metropolitans of the Pontic, Asian and Thracian dioceses, and they only, and further those bishops of the aforesaid dioceses who are among barbarians (ἐν τοῖς βαρβαρικοῖς), are to be consecrated (χειροτονεῖσθαι) by the . . . most holy throne of the most holy Church of Constantinople . . . ; the metropolitans of the aforesaid dioceses, as has been stated, are to be consecrated by the Archbishop of Constantinople, after agreed elections have been held in the customary manner and reported to him" (ψηφισμάτων συμφώνων κατὰ τὸ ἔθος γενομένων καὶ ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἀναφερομένων).<sup>108</sup> In their highly interesting commentaries on this canon, Zonaras and Balsamon explain the electoral procedure followed in their time: the electoral body consisted of metropolitans, members of the patriarchal synod; they submitted three names to the patriarch, who chose one of them, whom he

<sup>106</sup> Hefele and Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, I, p. 777.

<sup>107</sup> *In Can. VI Conc. Sardic.: P. G.*, CXXXVII, cols. 1445, 1448-9. The term ἐγίνοντο, used here by Balsamon, really refers to the whole process of appointment to an ecclesiastical office, which includes both an election and a sacramental consecration, and is generally described as *κατάστασις*. Cf. Siotis, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-6. Balsamon's use of the term is, hence, improper, since he himself admits in another passage that metropolitans were consecrated, but not elected, by the Patriarch. Cf. *infra*, note 109.

<sup>108</sup> Hefele and Leclercq, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 815-26.

then consecrated; and Zonaras adds significantly that the intention of the canon is to prevent the patriarch from doing as he pleases in the matter of appointing metropolitans.<sup>109</sup> The dioceses of Pontus, Asia, and Thrace, where the metropolitans were elected in the manner prescribed by this canon, are defined by Balsamon as follows: Pontus extends along the Black Sea coast as far as Trebizond, Asia embraces the territory around Ephesus, Lycia, and Pamphylia, Thrace includes the western lands as far as Dyrrhachium. But the bishoprics within these dioceses which, in terms of the canon, are "among barbarians" extend, according to Balsamon and Zonaras, much further afield: Balsamon, with small regard for historical verisimilitude, includes among them Alania and Russia, "the Alans," he asserts, "belonging to the Pontic diocese, the Russians to the Thracian"; while Zonaras, who also holds that the Alans and the Russians pertain to this group, states, with only slightly more respect for geography, that these two peoples are respectively "adjacent to" (*συμπαράκεινται*) the diocese of Pontus and the diocese of Thrace.<sup>110</sup> One may doubt whether this legalistic fiction that Russia formed part of the diocese of Thrace was taken very seriously by church circles in twelfth-century Byzantium; but Balsamon's exegesis provides curious evidence of the casuistry to which contemporary canonists were forced to resort in order to justify the right claimed by the Patriarch of Constantinople to consecrate the metropolitans of Russia.

Imperial legislation offers little material on the general rules governing the appointment of metropolitans. It is significant, however, that the evidence obtainable from this source emphasizes the prerogatives of both the provincial ecclesiastical authorities and the Emperor, at the expense of the Patriarch of Constantinople. Justinian's 123rd novel contains a clause which shows that metropolitans could be consecrated either by the patriarch or "by their own Synods" (i.e. presumably by bishops of their ecclesiastical provinces),<sup>111</sup> and it is noteworthy that this paragraph passed into the *Basilica*.<sup>112</sup> On the other hand, the creation of new metropolitan sees, or more precisely the promotion of episcopal sees to metropolitan status, was

<sup>109</sup> Zonaras (*P. G.*, CXXXVII, col. 489): οὐχ οὖς βούλεται ὁ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως χειροτονήσῃ μητροπολίτας, ἀλλ' ἡ ὑπ' αὐτὸν σύνοδος τὰς ψήφους ποιήσεται. Balsamon, *ibid.*, col. 485. Cf. T. O. Martin, "The Twenty-Eighth Canon of Chalcedon: a Background Note": *Das Konzil von Chalkedon. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed by A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht, II (Würzburg, 1953), pp. 433–58.

<sup>110</sup> Balsamon, *ibid.*, col. 485: Ἐπισκοπὰς δὲ εἶπε εἶναι ἐν τοῖς Βαρβάροις τὴν Ἀλανίαν, τὴν Ῥωσίαν καὶ ἑτέρας. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ Ἀλανοὶ τῆς Ποντικῆς εἰσι διοικήσεως, οἱ δὲ Ῥώσιοι τῆς Θρακικῆς. Zonaras, *ibid.*, col. 489.

<sup>111</sup> Τοὺς δὲ μητροπολίτας τοὺς ὑπὸ τῆς ἰδίας συνόδου ἢ ὑπὸ τῶν μακαριωτάτων πατριαρχῶν χειροτονουμένους: Nov. 123, cap. 3, ed. Zachariae v. Lingenthal, II, p. 298.

<sup>112</sup> *Basilica*, lib. III, tit. 1, cap. 10, ed. Heimbach, I, p. 95; ed. Zepos, I, p. 119.

a traditional prerogative of the emperor, a prerogative supposedly founded on the twelfth and the seventeenth canons of the Council of Chalcedon,<sup>113</sup> reaffirmed in an edict issued in 1087 by Alexius Comnenus,<sup>114</sup> reiterated in the fourteenth-century *Syntagma* of Matthew Blastares,<sup>115</sup> and frequently resorted to in the Macedonian and Comnenian periods.<sup>116</sup> This is reason enough for believing that the emperors often exerted considerable influence in elections of metropolitans, especially in the twelfth century, when many of the patriarchs appear to have submitted rather easily to Imperial control.<sup>117</sup>

One is forced to the conclusion that the practice prevailing in the Byzantine Church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries with regard to the election of metropolitans contravened the intention, if not the letter, of Canon Law on at least one essential point. Canon Law stipulated that a metropolitan was normally to be "appointed" (i.e. both elected and consecrated) by the bishops of his ecclesiastical province, with the assistance of bishops from neighboring districts; while in the case of appointments to sees situated in Pontus, Asia, and Thrace, the Patriarch of Constantinople had the right to consecrate the candidates who had been elected "in the customary manner" by the provincial bishops. In practice, however, as a result of the centralizing policy of the Byzantine Church, the electoral powers had by this time been transferred from the council of local bishops to the patriarchal synod in Constantinople, the *σύνδοδος ἐνδημούσα*, composed of metropolitans and bishops, appointed by the patriarch, of the higher ranks of the patriarchal secretariat and of Imperial representatives.<sup>118</sup> It was this body that elected three candidates for the vacant metropolitan see, of whom the patriarch chose and consecrated one.<sup>119</sup> However, the old canonical prescriptions, which gainsaid the current policy of ecclesiastical centraliza-

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Hefele and Leclercq, II, pp. 800–1, 805–6. Balsamon, in commenting on these two canons (*P. G.*, CXXXVII, cols. 432–3, 499–53), argues that the emperor has the right to promote episcopal sees to the rank of metropolitanates by virtue of the authority given to him by God (col. 432); Zonaras, on the other hand, regards this practice as uncanonical (*ibid.*, col. 436).

<sup>114</sup> *P. G.*, CXXXVII, cols. 929–32. Cf. F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches*, II (Munich and Berlin, 1925), p. 37, no. 1140.

<sup>115</sup> *Σύνταγμα κατὰ στοιχείον*: Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, VI, pp. 274–6.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. N. Skabalanovich, *Vizantiiskoe gosudarstvo i tserkov' v XI veke* (St. Petersburg, 1884), pp. 269–70, 362; J. M. Hussey, *Church and learning in the Byzantine Empire* (London, 1937), pp. 121–2.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Hussey, *op. cit.*, pp. 121, 133.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Skabalanovich, *op. cit.*, p. 363; Hussey, *op. cit.*, pp. 125–6; Metropolitan Makary, *Istoriya russkoy tserkvi*, II, pp. 1–2, n. 1, 214–8.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 51–2.

tion, were never abrogated; and it is curious to observe that Imperial legislation, embodied in the clauses of Justinian's novels which were included in the *Basilica*, similarly recognized the rights of the local authorities: bishops, it stipulated, were to be elected both by the clergy and by the civil authorities of the city, while metropolitans, in certain cases, could be consecrated by the bishops of their province. And it seems reasonable to suppose that, however much these prescriptions of the Empire's civil law were discountenanced by those who insisted on strictness (*ἀκρίβεια*) in the interpretation of Canon Law, the emperors of Byzantium, who were recognized as having a legitimate concern in the appointment of metropolitans, could when reasons of diplomacy demanded it, impose on their patriarchs a moderate and conciliatory policy towards the local authorities, ecclesiastical and lay, who could be allowed a voice in the choice of their own metropolitan, in accordance with the principle of *οἰκονομία*.

3. We must now consider, in the light of these facts, whether the Russians ever claimed, on the grounds of Canon Law, the right to elect their own metropolitan, and, if so, whether in the period under discussion they succeeded in so doing.

The first Apostolic Canon and the canons of the Church Councils relating to episcopal appointments were certainly known in Russia in the Kievan period, and were included in the Slavonic translations of the Byzantine "Nomocanons," notably of the *Nomocanon XIV titulorum*, the earliest extant Russian manuscript of which was copied in the eleventh or twelfth century.<sup>120</sup> The sixth canon of the Council of Sardica, and the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, relating to the appointment of metropolitans, are likewise cited in it.<sup>121</sup> This early Russian *Kormchaya* also contains the clauses of Justinian's 123rd and 137th novels prescribing the election of three candidates for a vacant bishopric or, if need be, of two or even one, by "the clergy and the leading citizens of the city."<sup>122</sup>

There is no doubt that, on a number of occasions, the Russians did claim the right, not only to elect their own metropolitan, but also to have him consecrated by the Russian bishops, and that they based this right on their interpretation of Canon Law. The most unequivocal evidence of this is found in the sources of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. About 1378

<sup>120</sup> Published by V. N. Beneshevich, *Drevne-slavyanskaya Kormchaya XIV titulov bez tolkovany*, I (St. Petersburg, 1906). The relevant canons on episcopal elections are printed on pp. 62, 84-5, 261, 269, 319, 345.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 284, 125-6. It is interesting to observe that the expression *ἐν τοῖς βαρβαρικοῖς* in the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, which twelfth-century Byzantine canonists extended to include Russia, was translated as "v pogan'skyikh" ("among pagans").

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 764-6, 800.

the Russian archimandrite Michael, renouncing his original intention of going to Constantinople in order to be consecrated metropolitan of Russia by the Patriarch, is said to have observed to his sovereign, the Grand Duke of Moscow, that such a journey was unnecessary, because he could be consecrated by Russian bishops by virtue of the Apostolic Canon which decreed that a bishop was to be ordained by two or three bishops.<sup>123</sup> In 1415 the Orthodox bishops of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, in a formal statement declaring that they had elected and consecrated Gregory Tsamblak as metropolitan of Kiev — an act performed against the express orders of the Patriarch of Constantinople — attempted to justify their behavior by misquoting the same Apostolic Canon: “two or three bishops,” they maintained, “consecrate a metropolitan.”<sup>124</sup> In 1441 Basil II, Grand Duke of Moscow, in a letter to the Patriarch complaining of the former metropolitan Isidore who had been rejected by the Russians on account of his Unionist behavior at the Council of Florence, requested the authorities of Constantinople to send him a written authorization to have the next metropolitan of Russia elected and consecrated in Russia by the Russian bishops, “according to the sacred canons,” and with reference to “the holy and divine Greek canons.”<sup>125</sup> Eleven years later, writing to the Emperor Constantine XI to inform him that the Russian bishops had, without permission from Constantinople, elected and consecrated a native candidate as metropolitan, Basil II justified this action by appealing to the canons of the apostles and of the Church councils.<sup>126</sup> Finally, the candidate so elected, the Metropolitan Jonas, declared in an encyclical letter written in 1458–9 that the legality of his consecration was founded on the first Apostolic Canon, the fourth canon of the First Oecumenical Council, and on “many other canonical rules.”<sup>127</sup>

It will be observed that in all these cases the Russian authorities seem to have applied to the appointment of their own metropolitan the provisions of Byzantine Canon Law which regulated the appointment of ordinary bishops. They can probably be cleared of the suspicion of having acted in bad faith.<sup>128</sup> In the first place, the Canon Law of the Eastern Church im-

<sup>123</sup> *Nikonovskaya Letopis'*, s.a. 1378: *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisey*, XI, p. 37; Cf. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 239–40.

<sup>124</sup> *Akty, otnosyashchiesya k istorii Zapadnoy Rossii*, I (St. Petersburg, 1846), no. 24, pp. 33–5.

<sup>125</sup> *Akty Istoricheskie*, I (St. Petersburg, 1841), no. 39, pp. 71–5; *Pamyatniki drevne-russkogo kanonicheskogo prava*, I<sup>2</sup>: *Russkaya Istoricheskaya Biblioteka*, VI (1908), col. 530.

<sup>126</sup> *Akty Istoricheskie*, I, no. 41, pp. 84–5; *Pamyatniki*, *ibid.*, no. 71, col. 583. This letter was never sent: cf. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, II, 1, pp. 487–8.

<sup>127</sup> *Akty*, I, p. 113, col. 2; *Pamyatniki*, no. 81, cols. 622–3.

<sup>128</sup> The Lithuanian bishops, it is true, misquoted in 1415 the first Apostolic Canon, by

plied no fundamental difference between the two electoral processes: bishops and metropolitans were to be elected by a council of bishops, the right possessed by the patriarch of giving his endorsement to, or withholding it from, the election of a metropolitan being in every way analogous to the prerogatives granted to a metropolitan in the case of an episcopal election.<sup>129</sup> Furthermore, it would seem that the claim made by the Russian bishops that they could rightfully, not only elect, but actually consecrate (i.e. formally appoint) their own metropolitan could find some justification in the ambiguous meaning of several technical terms used in the canons. In the texts to which reference has just been made, the Russians asserted that Canon Law gave them, in respect of their metropolitan, the right of *postavlenie*; now the term *postavlenie* (from the verb *postavlyati*) is generally used in the Slavonic *Nomocanon* to translate either of the two Greek words *κατάστασις* and *χειροτονία*, which are the technical terms most commonly found in the canons relating to the appointment of bishops and metropolitans: ἡ κατάστασις (from *καθιστᾶν*, *καθίστασθαι*) generally means the whole process of appointment to an ecclesiastical office, including the election (ἡ ψήφος) and the consecration (ἡ χειροτονία, ἡ χειροθεσία) of the successful candidate; while the term *χειροτονία*, which, as we have seen, retained a measure of ambiguity at least as late as the twelfth century, gradually shifted in the course of the first six centuries of the Christian era its principal meaning from "election" to "consecration."<sup>130</sup> The ambiguity of the Russian term *postavlenie* is particularly apparent in the Slavonic version of the fourth canon of the First Oecumenical Council which was cited by the Russian Metropolitan Jonas in support of the contention that he had been canonically appointed. The Greek text of this canon reads: Ἐπίσκοπον προσήκει μάλιστα μὲν ὑπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ ἐπαρχίᾳ καθίστασθαι· εἰ δὲ δυσχερὲς εἴη τὸ τοιοῦτο, ἢ διὰ κατεπείγουσαν ἀνάγκην ἢ διὰ μῆκος ὁδοῦ, ἐξάπαντος τρεῖς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ συναγομένους, συμψήφων γινομένων καὶ τῶν ἀπόντων καὶ συντιθεμένων διὰ γραμμάτων, τότε τὴν χειροτονίαν ποιεῖσθαι· τὸ δὲ κύρος τῶν γινομένων δίδοσθαι καθ' ἐκάστην ἐπαρχίαν τῷ μητροπολίτῃ.<sup>131</sup> In the Slavonic version the terms *καθίστασθαι* and *χειροτονία* are rendered by the

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substituting "metropolitan" for "bishop" in its text. They were not, as we shall see (cf. *infra*, pp. 64–5) the first ecclesiastics to have done so. The suggestion of P. Sokolov that the term "metropolitan" had been fraudulently substituted for "bishop" in the Russian version of the *Nomocanon* (*Russky arkhierей iz Vizantii*, p. 71) is quite gratuitous. The bishops would certainly have been better advised to cite the sixth canon of the Council of Sardica (cf. *supra*, p. 51).

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Sokolov, *Izbranie arkhierееv v Vizantii*, loc. cit., p. 251, and *supra*, p. 51.

<sup>130</sup> See Siotis, *op. cit.*, pp. 82–101, 105–7.

<sup>131</sup> Hefele and Leclercq, *Hist. des Conc.*, I, 539.

verbal and nominal forms of the same root: by *postavlenu byti* and *postavlenie* respectively; while the term which refers to the ratification given to the election by the metropolitan is translated as *vlast'*.<sup>132</sup> The twelfth-century Byzantine canonists, interpreting this canon, claimed that καθίστασθαι and χειροτονία refer here to the election of a bishop by other bishops, and that τὸ κῆρος means, in this context, not only the endorsement of the election, but also the consecration of the elected candidate by the metropolitan.<sup>133</sup> This inference, dubious enough in Greek, cannot possibly be drawn from the Slavonic text of the canon: for *postavlenie* can signify either the whole process of appointment (including election and consecration) or simply consecration, but not election alone.<sup>134</sup> As for *vlast' dayati* (τὸ κῆρος δίδοσθαι), it cannot by any stretch of imagination be taken to mean "to consecrate." The usual Slavonic equivalent of τὸ κῆρος was *blagoslovenie* (literally "the blessing"); and we may therefore conclude that the Russians, who assumed that the appointment of a metropolitan was essentially analogous to that of a simple bishop, were sincerely convinced that they were acting in full conformity with the fourth canon of the First Oecumenical Council by claiming the right to elect and to consecrate their own metropolitan (the right of *postavlenie*), while admitting that, to be valid canonically, these acts required the patriarch's ratification (*blagoslovenie*). Thus Basil II of Muscovy, in his above-mentioned letter to the Emperor Constantine XI, after justifying the election and consecration of the Metropolitan Jonas by the Russian bishops, declared: "Our Russian Church requests and seeks the blessing (*blagoslovenie*) of the holy, divine, oecumenical, catholic, and apostolic Church of Saint Sophia, the Wisdom of God, is obedient to her in all things, . . . and our father, the Lord Jonas, Metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia, likewise requests from her all manner of blessing (*blagoslovenie*) and union."<sup>135</sup>

It is improbable that the Russians discovered only in the fourteenth century that their natural desire to have their metropolitan elected by their own bishops in Russia was in full accordance with Canon Law, and that even the right claimed by the patriarch to consecrate him (if he was not already in episcopal orders) rested on no firmer foundation than a casuistic interpretation of the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon. It now remains to inquire whether the Russian authorities put forward the

<sup>132</sup> Beneshevich, *Drevne-slavyanskaya Kormchaya*, pp. 84-5.

<sup>133</sup> Balsamon, Zonaras, Aristenes, *In Can. IV Conc. Nicaen. I: P. G.*, CXXXVII, cols. 236-7.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. I. I. Sreznevsky, *Materialy dlya slovary drevne-russkogo yazyka*, II (St. Petersburg, 1902), col. 1259.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. note 126.



same claims in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and, if so, how far these claims were recognized by the Byzantine Patriarchate. A further aim of this investigation will be to consider whether, in the absence of any proof that the agreement between the Empire and Russia concerning the nationality of the primates of Kiev, attested by Gregoras, was concluded at any time between the late tenth and the early thirteenth century, the Russian authorities succeeded in this period in appointing native candidates to their own metropolitan see. These two aims are not necessarily identical, for the candidates put forward by the Russian authorities might conceivably in certain cases have been of Byzantine nationality, and, conversely, the patriarch of Constantinople may on occasion have selected a Russian as his nominee. But such cases, if they occurred at all, are not likely to have been frequent. It has been shown in the early part of this study that all those metropolitans of Kiev who were appointed by the patriarch between 1237 and 1378 at the request of the Russian authorities were in fact of Russian nationality. Thus our two remaining problems may best be approached by an attempt to ascertain the nationality of as many as possible of the primates of Russia in the Kievan period, and the circumstances in which they were appointed.

The difficulties of such an investigation have already been pointed out. The nationality of only three primates of Russia in the pre-Mongol period is known with certainty: these are the Russians Hilarion (1051–*ca.* 1054) and Clement (1147–55), and the Byzantine Cyril II (1224–33).<sup>136</sup> The first two are the only metropolitans of Kiev in this period whose appointment is described in any detail in contemporary Russian sources, which in most cases either fail to record the accession of the primates, or confine themselves to a monotonous repetition of the formula “he came” (from Byzantium).<sup>137</sup> Byzantine sources, with one possible exception,<sup>138</sup> do not

<sup>136</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 45 and note 86.

<sup>137</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 46 and note 87.

<sup>138</sup> This is the case of a certain Theophylactus, promoted, according to the fourteenth-century historian Nicephorus Callistus (who used an earlier Greek list of cases of translations of bishops) from the see of Sebasteia to Russia in the reign of Basil II (976–1025) (*P. G.*, CXLVI, col. 1196: ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς αὐτῆς ἡγεμονίας Θεοφύλακτος ἐκ τῆς Σεβαστηνῶν εἰς Ῥωσίαν ἀνάγεται). Honigmann (“Studies in Slavic Church History,” *Byzantion*, 17 [1944–5], pp. 148–9) takes him to have been, before his transfer to Russia, the metropolitan of Sebasteia in the province Armenia II, and, subsequently, the metropolitan of Russia. Cf. Laurent (“Aux origines de l’Eglise russe,” *Echos d’Orient*, 38 [1939], pp. 293–4). Dvornik, on the other hand, is doubtful of this interpretation and prefers to see in Theophylactus the bishop of Sebasteia under the metropolis of Laodicea, transferred to an episcopal see in Russia (*The Making of Central and Eastern Europe*, p. 179, n. 131). The question remains an open one, though the term ἀνάγεται, used by Nicephorus Callistus, implying promotion, would seem to favor the view of Honigmann and Laurent. Cf., however, the more sceptical view of Nicephorus’ evidence

so much as mention the appointment of any metropolitan of Russia in this period. We must, therefore, in attempting to infer the nationality of other metropolitans of Kiev and to ascertain the circumstances in which they were appointed, resort to the use of circumstantial evidence and later documents.

Some of these primates may be considered, with some probability, to have been of Byzantine nationality. Thus the Metropolitan George, mentioned in the Russian Primary Chronicle under the years 1072 and 1073, is said to have experienced doubts as to the sanctity of Boris and Gleb, the martyred sons of Vladimir I.<sup>139</sup> It is highly improbable that a native primate would have dissociated himself, even for a time, from the nation-wide cult of the country's earliest canonized saints which had been spreading in Russia for several decades.<sup>140</sup> John II, who became metropolitan not later than 1077, and died in 1089, was in all probability the uncle of the celebrated Byzantine poet Theodore Prodromus.<sup>141</sup> Nicephorus I, who occupied the see of Kiev from 1104 to 1121, can probably be regarded as a Byzantine on the grounds that one of his sermons opens with the following words: "Many homilies, my cherished and beloved children in Christ, ought I to preach to you with my tongue and to water your good earth, I mean your souls, with this water; but the gift of tongues, as the divine Paul would say, is not given to me, wherewith I might . . . carry out my commission, and for that reason I stand before you voiceless and am much silent." In spite of the rhetorical ambiguity of his language, we can probably conclude that the metropolitan, being ignorant of the Russian tongue, wrote his sermon in Greek, and had it translated and read out by someone else.<sup>142</sup>

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expounded by M. V. Levchenko ("Vzaimootnosheniya Vizantii i Rusi pri Vladimire," *Vizantijsky Vremennik*, 7 [1953], p. 219).

<sup>139</sup> *Povest'*, s.a. 1072, 1073, pp. 121, 122; Cross, pp. 154–6. Cf. *Zhitiya svyatykh muchenikov Borisa i Gleba*, ed. D. I. Abramovich (Petrograd, 1916), pp. 21, 56.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Priselkov, *Ocherki po tserkovno-politicheskoy istorii Kievskoy Rusi*, pp. 123–6; Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, I, 1<sup>2</sup>, pp. 290–1.

<sup>141</sup> On the date of John II's accession see Golubinsky, *ibid.*, p. 286. He is mentioned in the *Primary Chronicle*, s.a. 1086, 1088, and 1089 (the last time on the occasion of his death): *Povest'*, pp. 136–7; Cross, pp. 169–70. Theodore Prodromus wrote of himself: Παππον γὰρ εἰμοίρηκα Προδρομῶνίμου, — Καὶ θεῖον ἔσχον Χριστὸν ὀνομασμένον — Γῆς Ῥωσικῆς πρόεδρον ἄβρὸν ἐν λόγοις (Theodori Prodromi *Scripta Miscellanea*, P.G., CXXXIII, col. 1412). V. G. Vasilievsky drew attention to the similarity between the names Christos and Prodromos which Theodore's uncle must have borne (the first being a personal name, the second a family one), and the superscription "John, metropolitan of Russia, called the prophet of Christ" found in one of the writings of John II (*Trudy*, I [St. Petersburg, 1908], pp. 174–5). Cf. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, I, 1<sup>2</sup>, p. 286, n. 4.

<sup>142</sup> This is the inference drawn from Nicephorus' words by Golubinsky (*ibid.*, pp. 858–9). The text of his sermon is printed in Metropolitan Makary's *Istoriya russkoy tserkvi*, II<sup>8</sup>, pp. 349–52. Ignorance of the Russian language was, it seems, by no means uncommon among

Finally, the Metropolitan John IV (1164–6), on evidence which will be assessed later, can with some probability, in my opinion, be considered a Byzantine.<sup>143</sup> These, together with Theophylactus of Sebasteia, who in the opinion of some scholars was appointed metropolitan of Russia in the reign of Basil II (976–1025),<sup>144</sup> exhaust the list of the primates of the Russian Church in this period whose Byzantine origin may be inferred with some probability.

We must now consider whether any evidence can be found to support the view that a number of other primates of Kiev in the pre-Mongol period were native Russians and, if so, whether the circumstances in which they were appointed suggest that their nomination was the result of an agreement between the Byzantine and the Russian authorities. It is the quasi-unanimous belief of modern historians that, at least after 1039 — the date at which the subordination of the Russian Church to the See of Constantinople is first unequivocally attested in the *Primary Chronicle*<sup>145</sup> — and until the Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century, all the metropolitans of Kiev were Byzantine prelates, appointed, consecrated, and sent to Russia by the patriarch, with the exception of two — Hilarion and Clement, appointed by the Russian authorities in 1051 and 1147 respectively. Furthermore, for the great majority of these historians the appointments of the two native primates, Hilarion and Clement, are exceptions which prove the rule, and were nothing but rebellious attempts of the Russian Church to shake off the tutelage of Byzantium.

I submit that these views are not warranted by the evidence, and that there are grounds for believing that in the period under discussion the Byzantine authorities agreed on a number of occasions to sanction the appointment of a native candidate, elected and perhaps even consecrated in Russia. To support this submission it will first be necessary to re-examine the evidence we possess on the appointments of Hilarion and Clement.

Hilarion's elevation to the see of Kiev is described in two contemporary sources. The *Primary Chronicle*, in an entry dated 1051, states: "Yaroslav appointed (*postavi*) the Russian Hilarion as metropolitan in St. Sophia,

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the Byzantine metropolitans of Kiev; an example cited in the fifteenth century shows that it could lead to curious results: Basil II of Muscovy, in his above-mentioned letter to the Patriarch Metrophanes, supports his request that the Russians be allowed to appoint their own metropolitan by the additional argument that the necessary discussion of state secrets with the metropolitan must take place, if he is a Greek, in the presence of interpreters, young men whose discretion cannot always be trusted and who thus endanger national security. Cf. note 125.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 68–70.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. note 138.

<sup>145</sup> Cf. note 1.

having assembled the bishops.”<sup>146</sup> The term *postavi* is here used by the chronicler in a somewhat loose sense: for the verb *postavlyati*, as has been shown, served in an ecclesiastical context to render the terms *καθίστασθαι* and *χειροτονεῖν*,<sup>147</sup> neither of which, in the meaning they then possessed, would have been appropriate to the act of a secular ruler, in this case the Prince of Kiev Yaroslav. Yet the chronicler’s meaning seems clear enough: Hilarion was chosen for the office of metropolitan by the Russian sovereign, who then caused him to be formally elected and consecrated in the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev by his bishops.<sup>148</sup> The other contemporary testimony comes from Hilarion himself; his “Declaration of Faith” (*Ispovedanie Very*) concludes with the following statement: “I, by the mercy of . . . God the monk and priest Hilarion, was by His will consecrated and enthroned (*svyashchen bykh i nastolovan*) by the pious bishops in the great and God-protected city of Kiev, to be the metropolitan in it . . . This occurred in the year 6559 [A.D. 1051], in the reign of the pious Prince (*Kagan*) Yaroslav.”<sup>149</sup> The verb *svyatiti* (from which the passive participle *svyashchen* is derived) is equivalent to *χειροτονεῖν*, while *nastolovati* corresponds exactly to *ἐγκαθίδρυσθαι*, a term used to signify the solemn installation (*ἐγκαθίδρυσις*) of a newly appointed prelate.

Scholars in recent years have generally asserted that, in causing Hilarion to be appointed, the Russian ruler Yaroslav was trying to assert his Church’s independence of Constantinople.<sup>150</sup> Apart from the underlying assumption that the Byzantine authorities were in no circumstances prepared in this period to countenance the appointment of a native metropolitan of Kiev — the accuracy of which has been questioned above — this view seems to rest largely on the fact that Hilarion’s election was preceded by a war between Russia and the Empire. This war broke out in 1043, was decided by a fierce naval encounter in the Bosphorus in which the Russians were defeated, and ended in the same year.<sup>151</sup> The suggestion that Hilarion was appointed as a result of these hostilities was already made in the sixteenth-century Russian *Nikon Chronicle*.<sup>152</sup> Yet this view is not supported by the evidence. In

<sup>146</sup> *Povest’*, s.a. 1051, p. 104; Cross (p. 139) has mistranslated this passage.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 56–7.

<sup>148</sup> This is the interpretation given to the passage by the Metropolitan Makary (*op. cit.*, II, p. 300).

<sup>149</sup> *Pamyatniki drevne-russkogo kanonicheskogo prava*, II, 1, ed. V. N. Beneshevich: *Russkaya Istoricheskaya Biblioteka*, XXXVI (1920), p. 103.

<sup>150</sup> So, for instance, D. S. Likhachev (*Natsional’noe samosoznanie drevney Rusi* [Moscow, 1945], pp. 17, ff.) and G. Vernadsky (*Kievan Russia* [New Haven, 1948], p. 82).

<sup>151</sup> See G. Vernadsky, “The Byzantine-Russian war of 1043,” *Südost-Forschungen*, XII (Munich, 1953), pp. 47–67.

<sup>152</sup> *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisey*, IX, s.a. 1051 (St. Petersburg, 1862), p. 83.

the first place, peace was restored between Byzantium and Russia in 1046, and, probably at the same time, a treaty was concluded, by the terms of which Vsevolod, the son of Yaroslav of Kiev, was to marry a close relative, probably the daughter, of the Emperor Constantine IX Monomachus; the child of this marriage, the future prince of Kiev Vladimir Monomakh, was born in 1053.<sup>153</sup> It is scarcely probable that the friendly relations between the dynasties and governments of Byzantium and Kiev, restored by this marriage, were broken before 1051, the year of Hilarion's appointment; and supporting evidence of ecclesiastical relations between the two countries in that same year is provided by the *Nikon Chronicle*, which tells of the arrival in Russia from Constantinople, in 1051, of three experts on church singing together with their families, who were to instruct the Russians in the Byzantine chant.<sup>154</sup>

Further grounds can be found for the view that Hilarion's appointment was neither preceded nor followed by any ecclesiastical rift between Kiev and Byzantium. Referring to this event, the *Primary Chronicle* observes: "God inspired the prince, and he appointed him metropolitan"<sup>155</sup> — a significant comment, if the deference generally shown by the compilers of this document for the Byzantine Church is borne in mind. The *Nikon Chronicle* is even more explicit: "Yaroslav," it tells us, "took council with his Russian bishops, and they judged according to the sacred canon and the apostolic commandment as follows: the first canon of the holy Apostles [rules]: let two or three bishops consecrate a bishop; and in conformity with this sacred canon and commandment of the divine apostles, the Russian bishops, having assembled, consecrated (*postavisha*) Hilarion, a Russian, metropolitan of Kiev and of the whole Russian land, neither severing themselves from the Orthodox Patriarchs and from the piety of the Greek religion, nor disdaining to be consecrated (*postavlyatisya*) by them."<sup>156</sup> It is possible, of course, that the sixteenth-century chronicler was merely attempting in

<sup>153</sup> *Povest'*, s.a. 1043, 1053, pp. 104, 108; Cross, pp. 138 (who mistranslates: "after peace had prevailed for three years thereafter"; the true meaning is: "peace having been concluded three years later"), 142. Vernadsky suggests that after peace was restored in 1046, relations between Kiev and Constantinople were broken off once more, in 1048, and that the final agreement was not concluded till ca. 1052 (*op. cit.*, pp. 65-6). This conclusion, however, is, in my opinion, supported by no convincing evidence. For the view that the marriage agreement was reached in 1046 or 1047 see Dölger (*Regesten*, II, p. 7, no. 875) and V. Moshin ("Russkie na Afone i Russko-Vizantiiskie otnosheniya v XI-XII vv.", *Byzantinoslavica*, IX, 1947, pp. 74-5). That the Byzantine princess who married Vsevolod of Russia was the daughter of Constantine IX is stated by the seventeenth-century *Gustin Chronicle* (*Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisey*, II, s.a. 1043 (St. Petersburg, 1843), p. 267.

<sup>154</sup> *Polnoe Sobr. Russk. Let.*, IX, s.a. 1051, p. 85.

<sup>155</sup> *Povest'*, s.a. 1051, p. 105; Cross, p. 139.

<sup>156</sup> *Polnoe Sobr. Russk. Let.*, IX, p. 83.

this passage to vindicate the action of Yaroslav and of the eleventh-century Russian bishops in gratuitously ascribing to them this appeal to the first Apostolic Canon, by analogy with the arguments used by the Russians in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to justify the consecration of the metropolitan by the local bishops.<sup>157</sup> Yet the same Apostolic Canon was, as we shall see, undoubtedly invoked by the Russians in similar circumstances in the twelfth century, and there seems to be no valid reason for distrusting the chronicler's statements that the Russian bishops in 1051 had no desire to sever their canonical dependence on the Byzantine Church, and that no such severance did in fact take place. The same view is expressed even more explicitly by the seventeenth-century Ukrainian chronicler Zacharias Kopystensky, who asserted in his *Palinodiya* — a compilation based upon an encyclopaedic, if at times uncritical, use of earlier sources — that Hilarion obtained "the blessing" (*blagoslovenie*) and the ratification (*stverzhenie*) of his election from the Patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>158</sup>

All this evidence strongly suggests, in my opinion, that the election and consecration of Hilarion in Kiev by the Russian bishops at the instigation of Prince Yaroslav were accepted as valid by the Patriarch of Constantinople, and were ratified by him. An added argument in support of this conclusion is provided by the fact that the later catalogues of the primates of Russia, based on the official diptychs of the Church of Kiev, contain the name of Hilarion, whereas the Metropolitan Clement, who, as we shall see, was appointed a century later in defiance of the Byzantine authorities and contrary to their wish, does not figure in them.<sup>159</sup>

We do not know whether the Patriarchate of Constantinople gave its approval to Hilarion's appointment before or after the event. In the first alternative the concession granted to the Russian authorities in 1051 might perhaps be regarded as an outcome of the negotiations between Byzantium and Kiev that followed the war of 1043 and that led, as we have seen, to a political *rapprochement* between the two countries. Next to the agreement that the son of the prince of Kiev was to marry a Byzantine princess, the permission given to the Russians to elect and to consecrate their own metro-

<sup>157</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 54–5.

<sup>158</sup> *Pamyatniki polemicheskoy literatury v zapadnoy Rusi*, I: *Russkaya Istoricheskaya Biblioteka*, IV, (1878), cols. 1009–10. The *Gustin Chronicle* goes even further: Hilarion, it asserts, was appointed (*postavlen byst'*) metropolitan of Kiev by the Patriarch Michael Cerularius (*Polnoe Sobr. Russk. Let.*, II, p. 268) — an improper statement, since his *postavlenie* (ἡ κατάστασις, ἡ χειροτονία) was carried out by the Russian bishops, but one which may be taken to refer loosely to the Patriarch's ratification (τὸ κύρος) of the appointment.

<sup>159</sup> Cf., for example: *Novgorodskaya Pervaya Letopis'*, ed. A. N. Nasonov (Moscow, 1950), pp. 163, 473; *Voskresenskaya Letopis': Polnoe Sobr. Russk. Let.*, VII (St. Petersburg, 1856), p. 239. Cf. note 84.

politan would have served the best interests of the Empire's foreign policy; to placate the Russians by these concessions, to prevent the recurrence of their attack of 1043, and to reconcile them to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople — these aims would have commended themselves to the diplomatists in the government and Church of Byzantium who favored the policy of *oikonomia*. On the other hand, it is not impossible that the Russian authorities, convinced that they were acting in conformity with Canon Law, requested the Patriarch to ratify Hilarion's consecration *post factum*.<sup>100</sup>

The appointment, nearly a century later, of the Russian monk Clement of Smolensk as metropolitan of Kiev is usually considered an event analogous to the consecration of Hilarion — that is, as a second, and equally unsuccessful, attempt by the Russians to shake off Byzantine ecclesiastical control. In my opinion, the two events differed radically in their nature, their causes, and their results. Clement was appointed by the Prince of Kiev Izyaslav II, and consecrated by an assembly of Russian bishops in July 1147, after the previous metropolitan, Michael, had for unknown reasons laid the cathedral church of Kiev under an interdict and departed for Constantinople. Clement's consecration was preceded by a stormy discussion among the bishops as to whether this act was legal. A minority, led by Nifont, Bishop of Novgorod, and Manuel, Bishop of Smolensk, took the view that it was not, and refused to recognize Clement as their primate. The Russian *Hypatian Chronicle*, our principal contemporary source in this matter, gives the following account of this discussion: "The bishop of Chernigov said: 'I know that it is lawful for bishops, having assembled, to consecrate (*postaviti*) a metropolitan.'" The protests of the opposition are recorded as follows: "it is not in accordance with [canon] law for bishops to consecrate (*staviti*) a metropolitan without the Patriarch, but the Patriarch consecrates (*stavit*) a metropolitan"; and, addressing Clement, the opposing bishops added: "we will not recognize your authority, nor will we concelebrate with you, because you have not obtained the blessing (*blagoslovenie*) of St. Sophia [of Constantinople] nor of the Patriarch: if you remedy [this omission], and obtain the Patriarch's blessing (*blagoslovishisya ot patriarkha*), we will then recognize your authority."<sup>101</sup>

This remarkable text clearly shows the difficulty of the problem that faced the Russian bishops in 1147. The majority party, doubtless briefed

<sup>100</sup> This view is put forward by the Metropolitan Makary (*op. cit.*, II<sup>3</sup>, pp. 6–7) and by Golubinsky (*op. cit.*, I, I<sup>3</sup>, pp. 297–300), who suggest, rightly in my opinion, that Hilarion's appointment was recognized in Byzantium.

<sup>101</sup> *Ipatievskaya Letopis'*, s.a. 1147: *Polnoe Sobr. Russk. Let.*, II, p. 30.

by Clement himself, a man of great learning and a recognized authority on ecclesiastical matters,<sup>162</sup> based their view on Canon Law: bishops, they claimed, have the power to consecrate a metropolitan. It is generally thought that they were referring — albeit wrongly — to the first Apostolic Canon. This at least was the belief of the Lithuanian bishops in 1415, who misapplied this canon to the appointment of metropolitans, and quoted Clement's consecration as a precedent justifying their own consecration of Gregory Tsamblak.<sup>163</sup> But it is possible that the bishop of Chernigov was also appealing to Canon Law in a wider sense; for the most searching study of the *Nomocanon* would have revealed no stronger argument against his contention that the Russian bishops were empowered to consecrate Clement than the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, whose relevance to Russia was, to say the least, doubtful; while the same *Nomocanon* contained several clauses — drawn from the sixth canon of the Council of Sardica and from Justinian's 123rd novel — which could be interpreted to mean that an assembly of bishops had the right to consecrate a metropolitan.<sup>164</sup>

The minority party, which impugned the legitimacy of Clement's appointment, and which included such an expert canonist as Nifont of Novgorod,<sup>165</sup> agreed with their opponents on one point: they found nothing abnormal or improper in the fact that Clement was a Russian and that he had been elected by the Russian bishops, at the instigation of the prince of Kiev. It is obvious from the text of the *Hypatian Chronicle* that they disapproved solely of the refusal, or inability, of the metropolitan-elect to obtain the patriarch's ratification (*blagoslovenie* = τὸ κῆρος) of his election; and they made it clear that such a ratification would confer immediate validity on the whole proceedings. These facts not only suggest that the method of Clement's election was recognized by the entire Russian episcopate as being in full agreement with the canonical rules of the Eastern Church; they also imply that the appointment of native metropolitans by the Russian authorities, subject to the patriarch's confirmation, was a practice not unknown at the time.

This last inference is corroborated by evidence from an unexpected and hitherto neglected source. The eighteenth-century Russian historian, V. N. Tatishchev, who is known to have had access to medieval documents that have since perished, quotes in his *History of Russia* the words allegedly

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Sokolov, *Russky arkhierey iz Vizantii*, pp. 61–3.

<sup>163</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 55.

<sup>164</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 51–2, 54.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. Sokolov, pp. 67–8.



spoken by Izyaslav II of Kiev to the Russian bishops just before Clement's election. They are, if genuine, of considerable importance. "The metropolitan of Russia," the Prince declared, "is now dead, and the Church is left without a shepherd and a spiritual head and governor; whom formerly the Grand Princes [of Russia] used to elect and send to Constantinople to be consecrated; and now it is in my power to elect [a metropolitan], but it is not possible to send him to the Patriarch in Constantinople on account of the current disturbances and abundant strife; moreover, owing to this method of consecrating metropolitans, great and unnecessary expense is incurred [by us]; and above all, through this authority held by the patriarchs in Russia, the Byzantine emperors seek to rule and command us, which is contrary to our honor and advantage. According to the canons of the holy Apostles and of the Oecumenical Councils, it is laid down that two or three bishops, having assembled, should consecrate one [bishop], and there are more [than three] of you here; for this reason elect a worthy [candidate], and consecrate him metropolitan of Russia."<sup>166</sup>

It must be admitted that the uncorroborated evidence of an eighteenth-century historian, who used sources which are no longer extant, may be dangerous to handle, and that Tatishchev's reliability in such cases is a matter on which Russian scholars have not always agreed. Yet his scholarly honesty and conscientiousness are generally acknowledged today, and few historians would now venture to suggest that he was ever guilty of fabricating evidence. In several cases, Tatishchev's previously unconfirmed statements were proved to be true by subsequently discovered documents, and present day scholars are coming more and more, whenever his evidence seems inherently credible, to rely on him as a primary source.<sup>167</sup> In the present case, there appear to be several reasons for regarding Tatishchev's account as trustworthy, in substance if not in form. In the first place, even if we make allowances for possible rhetorical embellishments, it is highly improbable that he invented this speech of Izyaslav. It is much more likely that here, as in many other cases, he was quoting from a medieval source which has not come down to us. Secondly, if we compare the accounts of Clement's appointment given by the *Hypatian Chronicle* and by Tatishchev, we shall easily observe that the latter is the clearer and the more consistent, while the former is on certain points confused, self-contradict-

<sup>166</sup> *Istoriya Rossiiskaya*, II (Moscow, 1773), p. 301.

<sup>167</sup> On the general value of Tatishchev's evidence, see V. S. Ikonnikov, *Opyt russkoy istoriografii*, I, 1 (Kiev, 1891), pp. 50, 117-9, 123; II, 1 (1908), pp. 333-8; *Russky biografichesky slovar'*, vol. Suvorova-Tkachev (St. Petersburg, 1912), pp. 332-46; N. L. Rubinshtein, *Russkaya istoriografiya* (Moscow, 1941), pp. 77-9.

tory,<sup>168</sup> and shows obvious signs of doctoring, which is probably due to the fact that the chronicler felt obliged to expurgate the Prince's indiscreet speech. Thirdly, the content of Izyaslav's speech, as quoted by Tatishchev, accords well both with the national policy of the Prince of Kiev and with the political situation of the time: his blunt denunciation of the Byzantine Emperor's intervention in the internal affairs of Russia is an obvious allusion to the efforts which the government of Manuel Comnenus was making at that very time to extend its influence in eastern Europe, and to draw its rulers into the net of Byzantine diplomacy. In his attempts to play off the different princes of Russia against each other, the Emperor was then supporting Yuri Dolgoruky of Suzdal' against Izyaslav of Kiev.<sup>169</sup> It is no wonder, therefore, that Izyaslav was anxious to shake off the embarrassing tutelage of this powerful sovereign of the Byzantine metropolitans of Kiev, and to ensure that the primate of the Russian Church should not act in his realm as an agent of Byzantine imperialism.

Izyaslav's assertion that in former times the princes of Kiev chose their own metropolitans, and sent them for consecration to Constantinople, might, in view of his hostility to Byzantium, be regarded as a piece of special pleading. Yet the Russian bishops seem to have taken their right to elect their own metropolitan, subject to the patriarch's confirmation, for granted, and certainly there is nothing in the sources to suggest that this right was a novelty at the time. The remarkable, and possibly novel, feature of the events of 1147 was the intention of the Prince of Kiev to dispense with the patriarch's ratification. The open revolt of Izyaslav II and of the majority of the Russian episcopate against the See of Constantinople placed the Russian Church in a state of schism for eight years, at the end of which time communion was restored in circumstances which, for our present purpose, are highly instructive.

On Izyaslav's death at the end of 1154, his rival Yuri of Suzdal', the ally of the Emperor Manuel Comnenus, became Prince of Kiev. One of Yuri's first acts was to depose Clement, thus restoring the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople over the Russian Church. In 1156 a new metropolitan, Constantine I, appointed by the patriarch, arrived in Russia from Constantinople.<sup>170</sup> His origin and nationality are not mentioned in any contemporary source. Tatishchev, however, tells us that Constantine had formerly been bishop of Chernigov, and that, after Clement's deposition, he

<sup>168</sup> The confused nature of the Chronicle's account of Clement's election is noted by Golubinsky (*op. cit.*, I, 1<sup>2</sup>, pp. 302-3) and by Sokolov (*op. cit.*, p. 65).

<sup>169</sup> Cf. G. Vernadsky, "Relations byzantino-russes au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Byzantion*, 4 (1927-8), pp. 269-76; *Kievan Russia*, pp. 217-8.

<sup>170</sup> *Ipatievskaya Letopis'*, s.a. 1156: *PSRL*, II, pp. 79-80.

was elected by Yuri and several Russian bishops, and sent to Constantinople in order to be invested by the patriarch with the dignity of metropolitan of Kiev.<sup>171</sup>

Constantine's career as metropolitan was brief. In 1158, after Yuri's death, the sons of Izyaslav II occupied Kiev. Personal sympathies and family loyalty alike prompted them to reinstate Clement, and Constantine abandoned his see, escaping to Chernigov. But, in their ecclesiastical plans, the new masters of Kiev met with the stubborn resistance of their uncle Rostislav, whom they had invited to reign in Kiev. Rostislav flatly refused to accept Clement as metropolitan, "because," he stated, "he did not receive the blessing from St. Sophia and from the Patriarch."<sup>172</sup> The sons of Izyaslav, on the other hand, declined to reinstate Constantine. In the long and acrimonious discussion that ensued between uncle and nephews, one of the latter, Mstislav, according to Tatishchev, argued that Clement had been lawfully appointed by his father and the Russian bishops, and stood in no need of the patriarch's consecration; for the patriarch himself, he asserted, is chosen by the emperor and consecrated by bishops and metropolitans, his ecclesiastical inferiors, "and is not sent anywhere to be consecrated."<sup>173</sup> Eventually a compromise was reached, and it was decided to ask the patriarch to appoint another primate; this was the Metropolitan Theodore, who arrived from Constantinople in 1161. The *Hypatian Chronicle* notes his accession in terms which might be taken to imply that his candidature had been suggested to the patriarch by the Prince of Kiev: "Prince Rostislav," it states, "had sent for him."<sup>174</sup>

The Metropolitan Theodore died about 1163. Meanwhile, however, the deposed Clement had for some unknown reason gained the favor of Rostislav, who now sent an embassy to the Emperor Manuel Comnenus with the request that he be acknowledged metropolitan. But the Russian envoy was forestalled by the arrival in Kiev of a Byzantine embassy, together with a new metropolitan John IV, sent from Constantinople. The *Hypatian Chronicle* tells us that Rostislav at first refused to accept the patriarch's nominee, but was eventually induced to do so by the Emperor's lavish gifts and by the persuasion of the Byzantine ambassador. The text of the Chronicle, however, is, in this place, obviously defective: in all the manuscripts the speech made by the Byzantine envoy breaks off at the very beginning — in one manuscript a blank space was left — but the words that remain clearly

<sup>171</sup> Tatishchev, *Istoriya Rossijskaya*, III, pp. 36, 98, 117.

<sup>172</sup> *Ipatievskaya Letopis'*, s.a. 1159, *ibid.*, p. 85; cf. Golubinsky, *ibid.*, pp. 312–3.

<sup>173</sup> Tatishchev, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 117–9.

<sup>174</sup> *Ipatievskaya Letopis'*, s.a. 1161: PSRL, II, p. 89.

show that he was conveying to Rostislav some offer from the Emperor: "the Emperor says to you: 'if you accept with love the blessing of St. Sophia. . . .'" <sup>175</sup> There can be little doubt that the envoy's speech was followed by Rostislav's reply which the chronicler, or perhaps a later copyist, felt obliged to suppress. This reply, however, is cited by Tatishchev, in a passage which in other respects closely follows the Chronicle; it must indeed have seemed to the pious, law-abiding Russian scribe too embarrassing to quote: "The Grand Prince replied: 'this metropolitan [John IV], for the sake of the honor and the friendship which the Emperor has shown [me], I will now accept, but if in the future the patriarch should, without our knowledge and decision and contrary to the canons of the holy Apostles, consecrate a metropolitan for Russia, not only will I not accept him, but we will make a law for ever [prescribing] that [the metropolitans of Kiev] be elected and consecrated by the Russian bishops by order of the grand prince.'" <sup>176</sup>

Historians have differed in their assessment of the historical value of Tatishchev's evidence on this point. Some have dismissed Rostislav's speech as the product of Tatishchev's fantasy or misinformation, or at least have cast doubts on its authenticity.<sup>177</sup> Others have accepted it as a wholly, or substantially, true record.<sup>178</sup> The sceptics have, in my opinion, failed to produce a single convincing argument in favor of their view. Here again Tatishchev's testimony is not only inherently plausible; it clarifies and completes the account given by the *Hypatian Chronicle* of the Byzantine embassy to Russia, probably identical with the embassy sent by the Emperor to Kiev in 1165 which brought about a treaty between Manuel Comnenus and Rostislav, and which is described by Cinnamus.<sup>179</sup>

Rostislav's speech, which, I submit, should be accepted as genuine, at least in substance, sheds some additional light on the problem of appoint-

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, s.a. 1164, p. 92.

<sup>176</sup> Tatishchev, *op. cit.*, III, p. 142.

<sup>177</sup> The sceptics in this matter include Golubinsky (*op. cit.*, I, 1<sup>a</sup>, pp. 313-5), M. Hrushevsky (*Ocherk istorii Kievskoy zemli ot smerti Yaroslava do konca XIV stoletiya* [Kiev, 1891], pp. 363-4; the earlier opinions of Russian historians are cited here), and Sokolov (*op. cit.*, pp. 122-3).

<sup>178</sup> Apart from the older historians, like the Metropolitan Makary and S. M. Soloviev, who regarded Rostislav's speech as genuine, more recent scholars, such as F. Chalandon (*Jean II Comnène et Manuel 1<sup>er</sup> Comnène* [Paris, 1912], p. 482), S. P. Shestakov ("Vizantijsky posol na Rus' Manuil Komnen," *Sbornik statey v chest' D. A. Korsakova* [Kazan', 1913], pp. 366-81), Dölger (*Regesten*, II, p. 77), and Grumel (*Les Regestes des Actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, I, 3, no. 1056, p. 118) state that as a result of these negotiations Rostislav accepted John IV, but on condition that in the future no metropolitan of Kiev was to be appointed by the patriarch without his consent. This view implies a positive assessment of Tatishchev's evidence.

<sup>179</sup> Ioannes Cinnamus, *Histor.*, lib. V, cap. 12 (Bonn, 1836), pp. 235-6.

ments to the see of Kiev in the twelfth century. (a) In the first place, the Russian sovereign claimed that the patriarch had no right to consecrate a metropolitan of Kiev without his previous knowledge and consent. It should be noted that Rostislav, in matters of Canon Law, was not an irresponsible person; he had himself in the past refused to recognize Clement on the grounds that he had not obtained the patriarch's confirmation.<sup>180</sup> And if the Prince of Kiev considered himself entitled to exercise his right of "decision" in choosing a candidate and then requesting the patriarch to consecrate him, it is probable that some precedent existed on which this claim could be based — the same precedent, in fact, as was invoked in 1147 by Izyaslav II.<sup>181</sup> (b) Secondly, in threatening to institute a new law prescribing that metropolitans of Kiev should, in the future, be elected and consecrated in Russia, presumably without reference to Byzantium, Rostislav implied that he recognized that the patriarch still possessed the right to endorse or veto the election, and doubtless also to consecrate the elected candidate, a right so tactlessly questioned by Izyaslav II. (c) Finally, his appeal to "the canons of the holy Apostles" is yet another reference to the Canon Law of the Eastern Church, whose provisions on episcopal appointments — laid down in the first Apostolic Canon and in other clauses of the Byzantine *Nomocanon* — were, as we have seen, from time to time invoked by the authorities of the Russian Church in support of the right they claimed to elect and consecrate their metropolitan.

It is remarkable, furthermore, that the Byzantine authorities seem to have accepted, in practice if not in principle, Rostislav's first contention; for as soon as the Prince of Kiev had agreed to recognize the new metropolitan nominated by the patriarch, a treaty was concluded between him and the Emperor Manuel. This treaty, as several scholars have pointed out, must have included an ecclesiastical settlement;<sup>182</sup> and it is surely significant that John IV's successor as metropolitan of Kiev, Constantine II, was, according to Tatishchev, a Russian bishop chosen by Rostislav, and sent by him to Constantinople where he was confirmed and invested by the patriarch who dispatched him back to Russia in 1167.<sup>183</sup>

The circumstances in which Hilarion and Clement were elected and consecrated metropolitans of Kiev can thus, if they are examined without preconceived notions, lead us to the following conclusions:

(a) The elevation of Clement to the see of Kiev in 1147 was an event

<sup>180</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 68.

<sup>181</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 66.

<sup>182</sup> Cf. note 178.

<sup>183</sup> Tatishchev, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 151, 157. Constantine II's arrival in Russia is mentioned in the *First Novgorod Chronicle*, s.a. 1167, ed. Nasonov, p. 32.

essentially different from Hilarion's appointment to the metropolitanate in 1051; the former act was performed in defiance of the Byzantine authorities, and led to a temporary schism between the Churches of Kiev and Constantinople; the latter act was sanctioned, either before or after the event, by the Byzantine Patriarch.

(b) The circumstances and the aftermath of Clement's appointment cannot, any more than Hilarion's consecration, be used as an argument for the view that all the primates of Russia between 1039 and the middle of the thirteenth century were, with these two exceptions, Byzantine prelates, elected in Constantinople and consecrated and sent to Russia by the patriarch. The evidence of the sources adduced above suggests, indeed, the opposite. Both in 1051 and in 1147–65 the leaders of the Russian Church and State seem to have been genuinely convinced that Canon Law and, at least in the second case, historical precedent, entitled them to elect their own candidate, subject to the patriarch's confirmation; and on several occasions the Byzantine authorities appear to have accepted this contention and to have ratified their choice.

(c) The real difficulty seems to have arisen over the question of whether the consecration of the metropolitan-elect was the prerogative of the Patriarch of Constantinople or of the Russian bishops. The East Roman authorities, who at that time held the view that the power of consecrating metropolitans in the Byzantine Church was the visible symbol of the patriarch's spiritual jurisdiction over them, were naturally most reluctant to concede this right to the Russian bishops. Their acceptance of Hilarion's consecration in Kiev is the only case prior to the fifteenth century when they may, in practice, have conceded this privilege. The Russians, on the other hand, seem, in this period, to have held conflicting opinions on whether their metropolitan could be consecrated by their own bishops. The majority appear to have recognized the claims of the Byzantine Patriarchate in the matter and to have believed that the rights of their own bishops were confined to electing the primate. However, the provisions of Canon Law on the appointment of bishops and metropolitans, which in some respects conflicted with the centralized administration of the medieval Byzantine Church, the ambiguity of the Slavonic term *postavlenie* which served to render both the Greek words *κατάστασις* and *χειροτονία*,<sup>184</sup> and the understandable desire of their rulers to gain as much independence as possible from Byzantine control, contributed to the rise of another, and more nationalistic, current of opinion; and the conflict between these two schools of

<sup>184</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 56–7.

thought goes far toward explaining the passionate discussions that arose in Russia over the legitimacy of Clement's consecration, as well as Prince Rostislav's angry appeal, when he was confronted with a Byzantine metropolitan unilaterally appointed by the patriarch, to "the canons of the holy Apostles."

Our investigation has also revealed some grounds for believing that, apart from Hilarion and Clement, several other metropolitans of Kiev in this period may have been selected by the Russian authorities: Constantine I (1156–8) and Constantine II (1167–?) were, according to the evidence of Tatishchev, candidates selected by the Princes Yuri I and Rostislav I respectively, and sent to Constantinople to receive the Patriarch's consecration or confirmation.<sup>185</sup> It is quite possible that both were Russians by birth. Moreover, the Metropolitan Theodore (1161–*ca.* 1163) may perhaps also have been a candidate of Rostislav.<sup>186</sup> Two further metropolitans of the Kievan period were, according to Tatishchev, nominated by Russian rulers: Nicetas (1122–6), he claims, was sent as a bishop to Constantinople by the Prince of Kiev, Vladimir Monomakh, and was there appointed by the Patriarch metropolitan of Russia.<sup>187</sup> Tatishchev maintains that Nicetas, on his journey from Kiev to Byzantium in 1122, accompanied Vladimir's granddaughter who was going to contract an Imperial marriage. From other sources we know that she was to marry Alexius, the son of the Emperor John II Comnenus, in accordance with an agreement recently concluded between Russia and the Empire. Several details supplied by Tatishchev on this marriage, which supplement the evidence of other sources, have been accepted as reliable by modern historians,<sup>188</sup> and there seems to be no valid reason for rejecting his testimony on the metropolitan Nicetas. We may well have here a further example of an ecclesiastical concession made to the Russians by the Byzantine authorities within the framework of a wider political settlement. The other metropolitan on whom Tatishchev provides original information is Matthew (†1220), who, he asserts, was appointed by the Grand Prince of Suzdal', Vsevolod III.<sup>189</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 67–8, 70.

<sup>186</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 68.

<sup>187</sup> Tatishchev, *op. cit.*, II, p. 225. On Nicetas' accession to the see of Kiev, see the Laurentian and the Hypatian Chronicles, *s.a.* 1122.

<sup>188</sup> Tatishchev is the only source to give the name (Dobrodeya) of this Russian princess, and to state that the marriage, once agreed upon, was delayed for two years owing to the youthfulness of the bride and bridegroom. Cf. Kh. Loparev, "Brak Mstislavny (1122)," *Vizantĭsky Vremennik*, 9 (1902), pp. 418–45; S. Papadimitriou, "Brak russkoy knyazhny Mstislavny Dobrodei s grecheskim tsarevichem Alekseem Komninom," *ibid.*, 11 (1904), pp. 73–98.

<sup>189</sup> Tatishchev, *op. cit.*, III, p. 365.

The list of metropolitans of Kiev nominated, on Tatishchev's evidence, by the Russian authorities could perhaps be extended by the addition of another name. In 1089, the *Primary Chronicle* tells us, Yanka, the daughter of Prince Vsevolod of Kiev, returning from Constantinople, "brought back [to Kiev] the Metropolitan John." Historians have generally concluded from this text that this metropolitan, John III (1089–90) was chosen for his Russian post either by Yanka herself or by her father.<sup>190</sup>

This reconstruction of the list of Russian nominees to the see of Kiev in the eleventh, twelfth, and early thirteenth centuries relies heavily on the evidence of Tatishchev. His testimony has been doubted or impugned by reputable historians, and the highly critical attitude adopted by such scholars as E. Golubinsky toward his unconfirmed evidence on the nomination of several metropolitans of Kiev by the Russian authorities has tended to relegate it to the lumber-room of groundless hypotheses or pet preconceptions. This scepticism provides a strange contrast to the reliance that modern historians are increasingly placing on Tatishchev's evidence on other matters, evidence which has often been found to rest on medieval documents no longer extant. It would doubtless be rash to assume that every time Tatishchev asserts that a certain metropolitan was nominated by the Russian authorities, his statement is necessarily true. On one occasion at least, when his testimony appears to contradict the evidence of an earlier source, it should be treated with reserve.<sup>191</sup> However, his evidence on

<sup>190</sup> *Povest'*, s.a. 1089, p. 137; Cross, p. 170. Cf. Vasilievsky, *Trudy*, II, 1, p. 36; Priselkov, *op. cit.*, pp. 163–4; Sokolov, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

One might feel tempted to add two more names to this list: (1) the Metropolitan Efrem, mentioned in the *Primary Chronicle* s.a. 1089 (*Povest'*, p. 137, Cross, p. 170), is said in a contemporary source to have been, before his consecration, a member of the household of Prince Izyaslav I of Kiev (*Nestor's Life of St. Theodosius: Chteniya v Moskovskom Istoricheskoy Obshchestve*, III [1858], 3, p. 75): this suggests that he may have been a Russian. (2) According to the seventeenth-century *Gustin Chronicle*, a certain Cyril was consecrated metropolitan of Kiev in 1225, and was a Russian (*Polnoe Sobr. Russk. Let.*, II, s.a. 1225, p. 335). Both cases, however, are dubious. Efrem, though the *Nikon Chronicle* calls him "metropolitan of Kiev and of All Russia" (*Polnoe Sobr. Russk. Let.*, IX, s.a. 1091, 1095, 1096, pp. 116, 125, 128), in all probability was only the bishop of Pereyaslavl' and bore the honorary title of metropolitan: Cf. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, I, 1<sup>2</sup>, pp. 287, n. 2, 328–9; Sokolov, *op. cit.*, p. 53. As for Cyril, his very existence is dubious: the *Gustin Chronicle*, followed by the later catalogues of primates of Russia, mentions the appointment in rapid succession of two metropolitans of that name: the first Cyril, a Russian, consecrated in 1225; the second one, of unspecified origin, consecrated in 1230. We know from earlier and unimpeachable sources that between 1224 and 1233 the see of Kiev was occupied by Cyril II, a Byzantine prelate sent from Nicaea (cf. *supra*, note 86).

<sup>191</sup> Thus Tatishchev asserts that in 1096 the prince of Kiev, Svyatopolk II, chose Nicephorus, Bishop of Polotsk, for the office of metropolitan and had him consecrated by the Russian bishops (*op. cit.*, II, pp. 169, 479, n. 421). A Metropolitan Nicephorus is mentioned by the *Nikon Chronicle* s.a. 1097 (*Polnoe Sobr. Russk. Let.*, IX, p. 132), so that Tatishchev's evidence is not *prima facie* incredible. However, in that same year a Metropolitan Nicholas



the Kievan metropolitans accords well, in my submission, with the history of the ecclesiastical relations between medieval Russia and Byzantium, that has formed the theme of this article. The speeches of Izyaslav II to the Russian bishops, and of Rostislav I to the Byzantine ambassador, if they are not forgeries, must be regarded as illuminating contributions to the subject under discussion. They show that at least in the middle of the twelfth century a tradition existed in the ruling circles in Russia that the metropolitans of Kiev could be, and were from time to time, elected by the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of the country.

One last piece of evidence can perhaps be adduced to support this view. In 1441 the Grand Duke of Moscow, Basil II, in a letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople, after reminding his correspondent of the circumstances of Russia's conversion to Christianity, made the following statement: "strengthened and confirmed by piety, the sons, grandsons and great grandsons [of St. Vladimir] . . . received from time to time the most holy metropolitans in their country from the Imperial City [of Constantinople], sometimes a Greek, sometimes a Russian from their own land, consecrated by the most holy Oecumenical Patriarch."<sup>192</sup> It is possible, of course, that this alternation of Byzantine and native primates, so strikingly described by the words "sometimes . . . sometimes" (*ovogda . . . inogda*), should be taken to refer to the regular succession of Greek and Russian metropolitans of Kiev, which we observed between 1237 and 1378. Yet the general terms in which Basil II's statement is couched, and his mention of the immediate descendants of Vladimir I, seem to suggest that he was alluding to a tradition which was thought in his time to go back to the Kievan period.

### III

The results of our inquiry must now be briefly summarized. It has been shown that the text of Nicephorus Gregoras which mentions the Russo-Byzantine agreement stipulating that the metropolitans of Kiev were to be appointed in accordance with the principle of alternate nationality — a text accidentally omitted from the Bonn edition of the *Ἱστορία Ῥωμαϊκή*, and consequently neglected by historians — deserves to be restored to its proper place in the thirty-sixth book of Gregoras' work, and should be considered as a source providing fresh evidence on the ecclesiastical relations

is mentioned in the *Primary Chronicle* (*Povest'*, s.a. 1097, p. 174; Cross, p. 191). A confusion between the names Nicholas and Nicephorus is certainly within the bounds of possibility.

<sup>192</sup> Cf. note 125.

between the Empire and medieval Russia. The attempt to assess the reliability of this evidence has led us to reconsider, within a somewhat wider framework, several aspects of these relations between the early eleventh and the late fourteenth centuries. Although no direct evidence has come to light to corroborate Gregoras' statement that a formal agreement concerning the alternate nationality of the primates of Russia was actually concluded between the authorities of Byzantium and Kiev, circumstantial evidence tends to support his testimony, especially in the period between 1237 and 1378, when Byzantine and Russian prelates were appointed in turn with striking regularity to the metropolitan see of Kiev by the Patriarch of Constantinople.

The lack of any similar observable alternation in the nationality of the metropolitans of Kiev in the earlier, pre-Mongol, period of Russian history has led us to investigate in some detail the methods and machinery by which the primates of Russia were then appointed. This investigation has called in question two widely held assumptions: the belief that the patriarchs of Constantinople in the eleventh and twelfth centuries invariably insisted on selecting their own candidates for the see of Kiev, and the view that all the primates of the Russian Church in this period, with the exception of Hilarion and Clement, were Byzantine nominees of the patriarch. The evidence of contemporary sources, and in some cases of later authorities, notably the testimony of Tatishchev, suggests, in my opinion, that a number of metropolitans of Kiev in this period had, prior to their consecration or confirmation by the patriarch, been nominated in Russia by the local authorities of Church and State, and that the Byzantine Patriarchate, no doubt for reasons of temporary expediency, accepted and tolerated this practice.

We also considered the grounds, ecclesiastical and political, on which this practice was founded. The Canon Law of the Eastern Church, in its prescriptions concerned with the appointment of bishops and metropolitans, envisages the active participation of the local episcopate in the election and consecration of these dignitaries. Even the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, which granted to the Patriarch of Constantinople the power to consecrate the metropolitans of certain specified ecclesiastical provinces — and which twelfth-century Byzantine canonists took, with some casuistry, to apply to Russia as well — stipulated that the metropolitans of those provinces were to be elected by the local bishops. However, by the time the Russians were converted to Christianity, the growing centralization of the Byzantine Church had caused the prerogative of electing metropolitans to be transferred to the Patriarchal Synod in

Constantinople, and the Byzantine Patriarchate, in accordance with a new interpretation of Canon Law, officially held that the primate of the Russian Church should, strictly speaking, be elected, appointed and consecrated in Constantinople — should be, in other words, an ἀρχιερεὺς ἐκ Βυζαντίου.<sup>103</sup> The Russians, however, challenged this view on a number of occasions — recorded in the sources of the eleventh, twelfth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries — and claimed the right to have their metropolitan elected and consecrated by their own bishops, in accordance with their interpretation — often a forced one — of Canon Law.

These conflicts between the Russian episcopate and the Byzantine Patriarchate were further complicated by the intrusion of political factors and the intervention of the secular authorities. The princes of Kiev and Moscow, for all the deference most of them felt for the unique position occupied by the Byzantine emperor and patriarch in Orthodox Christendom, were naturally anxious to have a controlling influence on the selection of the primates of their Church; and some of them, notably in the twelfth century, are known to have chafed under the distant, but quite overt, hegemony of the Imperial overlord of their Byzantine metropolitans. The Byzantine emperors, for their part, regarded the metropolitans of Kiev as valuable diplomatic agents, capable of using their considerable moral and spiritual authority to ensure the docility and secure the alliance of the powerful Russian realm; and alliance with Russia was for the Imperial government, so frequently faced in this period with military and economic crises, a prime necessity.

And yet, just because Russia was a country whose military and economic resources commanded the respect of Byzantine statesmen, the emperors could not fail to realize that their aim of building up a favorable balance of power in the steppes and forests of eastern Europe could best be achieved by the use of tactful diplomacy. The most clear-sighted of them still knew the wisdom, which their predecessors had gained through long experience of negotiating and fighting with the barbarians, of acquiring useful allies and appeasing potential foes by timely concessions to their national susceptibilities. And, as the history of the Empire's relations with its northern neighbors, and particularly with the Balkan Slavs, so clearly illustrates, these concessions were apt to include the granting to the satellite states of a measure of ecclesiastical self-government; the recognition by the Emperor Basil II about 1020 of the autonomy of the Bulgarian Church, whose primate, the archbishop of Ohrid, was to be consecrated by his own suffragan bishops, the Emperor reserving for himself the right of appoint-

<sup>103</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 47.

ing or nominating him, is an outstanding and contemporary example of this ecclesiastical diplomacy.<sup>194</sup> It would be surprising if the Imperial government had not been prepared to concede a somewhat more modest privilege to the Russians, and to permit them, from time to time, to nominate their own candidate for the metropolitan see of Kiev. Such a concession would have been all the more justified, since Justinian's legislation on the appointment of bishops and metropolitans — which was included in the *Nomocanon* and in the *Basilica* — allowed the local authorities a leading part in the electoral process, a clause of his 123rd novel even recognizing the right of the provincial bishops to consecrate their metropolitans, and since the appointment to vacant metropolitan sees was acknowledged in Byzantium to lie within the emperor's legitimate sphere of interest.

The often competing interests of the four different parties concerned in the appointment of the metropolitan of Kiev — the Russian bishops, the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Russian princes, and the Byzantine Emperor — could, it seems, have been reconciled in the following manner: Whenever the requirements of Imperial diplomacy demanded it, the Russians were allowed to select their own candidate; this choice, however, amounted simply to nomination, and was not considered by the authorities of the Byzantine Church to constitute a canonical election; the election — in this case a pure formality — was made by the Patriarchal Synod in Constantinople, the *σύνδοδος ἐνδημοῦσα*; finally, the candidate thus "elected" was consecrated by the Patriarch, or, if he already possessed episcopal orders, was formally proclaimed by him as the appointed metropolitan of Kiev. This procedure, which was resorted to during the appointment of the Russian Metropolitan Peter in 1308,<sup>195</sup> and which the Byzantine Patriarchate actually recommended to the local authorities of Anchialus and Trebizond in the early fifteenth century,<sup>196</sup> must have been employed on a number of other occasions. While satisfying the desire of the Russian authorities to have their own candidate appointed, it enabled the Church and government of the Empire to achieve a compromise between the demands of canonical rigidity (*ἀκρίβεια*) and a policy of reasonable concessions (*οἰκονομία*).

The working compromise on the nationality of the primates of Russia, described by Gregoras, would have fitted well into this pattern of ecclesiastical diplomacy. Whether the agreement between the Empire and Rus-

<sup>194</sup> Cf. B. Granić, "Kirchenrechtliche Glossen zu den vom Kaiser Basileios II. dem autokephalen Erzbistum von Achrida verliehenen Privilegien," *Byzantion*, 12 (1937), pp. 395-415; Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 276, note 1.

<sup>195</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 35-6.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 41-2.

sia, embodying this compromise, was made, as Gregoras himself believed, at the time of Vladimir's conversion to Christianity in the late tenth century, or whether, as seems perhaps more likely, it was concluded in the first half of the thirteenth century when the Imperial authorities resided in Nicaea,<sup>197</sup> its existence, which the evidence cited above tends, in my submission, to confirm, may provide a further example of that genius for combining a program of Imperial hegemony with a policy of concessions to the national aspirations of Byzantium's ecclesiastical satellites, which was displayed on so many occasions by the Church and Empire of East Rome.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>197</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 34.

<sup>198</sup> Some of the views expressed in this article were put forward in a tentative and preliminary manner in a paper read by the author at a symposium on "Byzantium and the Slavs" held at Dumbarton Oaks in April, 1952; also previously, in a shorter form, at the Eighth International Congress of Byzantine Studies at Palermo in 1951. A brief summary of this communication ("Le Patriarcat Byzantin et les métropolités de Kiev") is printed in *Atti dello VIII Congresso Internazionale di Studi Bizantini*, I (Rome, 1953), pp. 437–8 [*Studi Bizantini e Neoeellenici*, 7].